THE

GLEANER:

A SERIES OF

PERIODICAL ESSAYS;

SELECTED AND ARRANGED FROM

SCARCE OR NEGLECTED VOLUMES,

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION, AND NOTES,

BY

NATHAN DRAKE, M. D.

AUTHOR OF "LITERARY HOURS," AND OF "ESSAYS ON PERIODICAL LITERATURE."

——— apis Matinæ
More modoque,
Grata carpentis thyma per laborem
Plurimum. Hor.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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From these works, many of which possess considerable merit, though not more than two or three of them have been reprinted, I trust that the selection has been such, as to render this portion of THE GLEANER peculiarly interesting and instructive.

Hadleigh, Suffolk, Jan. 1811.



THE GLEANER.

No. CI.

Τυδεὺς, μικρὸν δέμας, ἀλλὰ μαχητής.

HOMER.

Tydeus, of person small! what then?
Great heroes may be little men.

COLMAN.

NOTWITHSTANDING the eminent advantages resulting from the many rare talents and qualities necessarily included in the illustrious character of a genius, I am, I must confess, neither the most completely happy, nor the most universally accomplished man in the creation. Nature, who has in some instances been lavish in her bounties to me, has in others been rather too unkind, and, indeed, remarkably niggard of her favours. Vanity, for example, she has so exuberantly poured upon me, that my portion, to say no more of it, is at least sufficient to em-

bolden me to venture forth as an author; and my sensibility is, at the same time, unfortunately so nice and exquisite, that it becomes a perpetual thorn in the sides of that very vanity, laying it open to every slight attack, and rendering it too easily wounded by the petulance of folly, the slanders of envy, the gross jests of buffoonery, or the malice of a review.

But the greatest drawback, which nature has, in my case, made on that vanity and self-applause which contributes more or less to the happiness of every man and woman in the world, is most unfortunately external; visible to all eyes, open to general observation, and liable to ridicule from the dullest fellow that casts a look upon my person. Peculiarities of figure, whether in make, size, or complexion, have always been deemed an inexhaustible source of ridicule to the associates of the man who possesses them. He, whose person is remarkable, seems to be considered as a butt planted by nature, for all other men to shoot their wit at. The coarse humour of our own vulgar, however blind to mental blemishes, is sharp-sighted as a lynx to external defects, and exerts itself as liberally on genteeler passers-by, as on their own hump-backed companions, whom they jocularly entitle, "my lord." Homer represents the gods them-

selves as laughing at the ugly, awkward, blacksmith divinity of Vulcan. Tully, in his dialogues de Oratore, recommends it to an orator to be pleasant and facetious on personal defects, though perhaps rather unadvisedly, and unsuitably to the grave dignity of that profession: and, now we are got so deep in learned quotations, I defy the scholar to find in Lucian, Aristophanes, Theophrastus, or any other author, ancient or modern, a greater profusion of wit and humour bestowed on any one subject, than Shakspeare has lavished, in his several descriptions of Falstaff, Shallow, and Bardolph, on a fat man, a lean man, and a man with a red nose. Happy, indeed, would it be for any other man (especially if he be a wit and a genius) who bears about in his person this native fund of pleasantry, if he could say with Falstaff, and with equal justice too, "I am not only witty myself, but also the cause of wit in other men."

Let not, however, the partial reader conclude too hastily from what has been said, that I pretend to the honour of the deformity of Scarron, the crookedness of Pope, the blindness of Milton or Homer, or even the long nose, or no nose, of Tristram Shandy. Not to make any further delay of introduction, after having so long announced myself to the good company, the

truth, and the whole truth, is, that I am of a remarkable low stature; a sort of diminutive plaything of Madam Nature, that seems to have been made, like a girl's doll, to divert the good lady in her infancy; a little *i* without a tittle o'top; an human figure in miniature; a make-weight in the scale of mortality; a minim of nature; a mannikin, not to say minnikin; and, indeed, rather an abstract or brief chronicle of man's fair proportions, than a man at large. My person, indeed, is not formed in that excellent mould of littleness, which, as in some insects and animals, become beautiful from the nice texture and curious composition of its parts. I may be seen, it is true, without the help of a microscope, and am not even qualified to rival the dwarf Coan, by being exhibited to my worthy countrymen at sixpence a-piece. I am, however, so low in stature, that my name is never mentioned without the epithet "little" being prefixed to it; the moment that my person presents itself among strange company, the first idea that strikes the beholders is the minuteness of the figure, and a whisper instantly buzzes round the room, "Lord, what a little creature!" As I walk along the street, I hear the men and women say to one another, "There goes a little man!" In a word, it is my irreparable misfor-

tune to be, without my shoes, little more than five feet in height. Eating of daisy-roots, we are told, will retard a man's growth; if the French alimentary powder, or any other new-invented diet, would at once elevate me, and surprise my friends, I would go through a regimen to be raised ever so little nearer heaven. I think I could not endure to have my limbs stretched to a nobler length in the bed of Procrustes; but, if I could be rolled out like dough or paste, or extended by relaxation, like a rope or an eel's skin in dry weather, I believe I should readily assent to it: for there is no impossibility existing in nature, or recorded in Scripture, at the truth of which I am more apt to repine, than that no man is able to add a cubit to his stature.

When the camel applied to heaven for some amendment in his figure, Jupiter (says the fabulist) cropped his ears for his impertinence. I should be very loth, like some of my cotemporaries of the quill, by any means to endanger my ears; and yet nothing but the back of the camel being placed on my little body, could make me wish more ardently, than I do at present, for an happy alteration in it. For, not to mention the natural inconveniences of being trampled on and run over in a crowd, almost pressed to death by huge fellows and fat old women in machines

and stage-coaches, deprived of all pleasure at sights and shews by taller persons taking their places before me ;—not to dwell, I say, on these and several other circumstances of the same nature, it provokes me to find, that though I can sometimes as absolutely forget my littleness as if I was as big as Goliah, yet my friends and acquaintance cannot, for one moment, lose the consideration. The minuteness of my person so entirely governs their idea of my character, that they are not able to detach the contemplation of one from the other; and, from the mere credit of having a larger quantity of clay and dirt put together in their huge frames than myself, they become (as Beatrice terms it) such valiant pieces of dust, that a man who has room enough in his bosom for more gall than a pigeon, must be moved with indignation. If they think of my marriage, they set themselves to consider what fairy they shall find for me, or whether it would not be better to cross the breed, by providing me an Amazon: they would have my chariot, like queen Mab's, made out of a hazel-nut: and as to a house, the case of a treble hautboy were a mansion for me.

A very intimate friend of mine one day inadvertently betrayed to me, that his wife always spoke of me by the name of "the baby;" but

afterwards, in order to mend the matter, he added, that she had no contemptible opinion of my person, for that she always said, " she never saw such a little man that was so straight." In families where I visit, growing lads of thirteen or fourteen years of age are called out to stand back to back with me, and measure whether there is any difference between their height and mine: and once, I remember, on my visit to an acquaintance newly married, being introduced to the bride, who was a fine tall woman (but a prude or a wit, I cannot tell which), she held her head so high, without making the least inclination of her body, that I could as easily have scaled the Monument as have come at the tip of her chin without the help of a pair of steps. One day, just after the passing of the broad wheel act, being on a little poney, the man of the turnpike, seeing me and my nag approach, cried out, " Nay, nay, this must be above weight, I am sure;" and, closing the gate, left me to go over the place appointed for weighing the waggons. Another time, after having dined at a nobleman's house, I was honoured with the use of his lordship's chariot to carry me home, but was desired first to set down another of the company at St. James's coffee-house. My fellow-traveller, if I may so call him, was one of the biggest and tallest men

in the kingdom, and was at least four-and-twenty stone in weight. Thus ridiculously coupled, like a lean rabbit and a fat one, we engaged the attention of the whole street, particularly of the company at Arthur's, who stood laughing, as we passed by, to see the body of the chariot inclined all one way, as if we were driving on the slope of a hill, though the wheels ran on as smoothly and evenly as Madam Catharina's clockwork equipage on a parlour floor. But I must declare, that the most ridiculous distress I ever underwent, was, when my unfortunate curiosity carried me to see that wonderful phenomenon of nature, the Italian giant, scarce less than eight feet high! While the rest of the company were walking under his arm, he seemed to expect that I should have crept between his legs; and when I offered to present him with the usual gratuity, he absolutely refused to accept it, saying, "that he thought it full as great a curiosity to see me, as I could possibly think it to see him." In short, my situation is almost as ridiculous as that of Gulliver in Brobdignag; and though I cannot, like him, be carried to the ridge of a house-top by a monkey, or be stuck upright, by an unlucky lad, in a marrow-bone, yet every day brings with it fresh instances of mortification.

But there is no circumstance moves my spleen more forcibly than the insolence of those whose stature very little exceeds my own, and who seem to look down on such urchins as myself with a consciousness of their happy superiority. One of these always affects to call me "the little man;" and another small gentleman (a great actor, I mean, whom, in some future histrio-mastix, some nescio quid majus Rosciade, I may possibly take a peg or two lower) is fond of sidling up to me in all public places, as second rate beauties commonly contrive to take a dowdy abroad with them for a foil. For my own part, though I could wish to be taller, I never made use of any undue arts to appear so. I am content to submit my littleness fairly to the world. I never suffered my hat to rise into the air with a staring Kevenhuller, and I would as soon appear in stilts, as be lifted from the ground by double soles or high heels to my shoes. I rather endeavour to console myself by looking abroad in the world for great men of another order than those described by serjeant Kite: and so successful have been my researches of this kind, that I could set down a long catalogue of persons eminent in the state, in the professions, in arts and sciences (not to mention authors and actors), who are scarce taller than myself;

so that in this respect, we may fairly pronounce in favour of the present period, as Lord Clarendon has declared of his own, that "it was an age in which there were many great and wonderful men of that size." I do not know whether, in this extremity of war, any new raised regiment offers bounty-money for volunteers five feet high; but we flatter ourselves that, in case an invasion should take place, we could form a corps infinitely more formidable than the late king of Prussia's useless tall regiment.

I cannot close this paper without returning my thanks to the learned university of Oxford, and the illustrious Queensbury family, for having published the above-mentioned papers of Lord Clarendon, in which there is much matter of consolation to gentlemen of the like height and dimensions with myself. It there appears, that most of his lordship's intimate friends were great and wonderful men of low stature. Mr. Hales, he tells us, was one of the least men in the kingdom, and one of the greatest scholars in Europe. Mr. Chillingworth was of a stature little superior to Mr. Hales. Of his friend Sidney Godolphin he says, that there never was so great a mind and spirit contained in so little room; so large an understanding, and so unrestrained a fancy, in so very

small a body. Of Sir Lucius Carey, afterwards Lord Falkland, who was but little taller than Sidney Godolphin, he speaks so highly, that I cannot resist the temptation of gratifying myself and all other little men by transcribing the description of his person, hoping it may serve to recommend us to the favour of the world, and particularly to the good graces of the ladies, who are desired to take notice, that Sir Lucius married for love, and made a most excellent husband. Lord Clarendon speaks thus of him: "With these advantages he had one great disadvantage (which, in the first entrance into the world, is attended with too much prejudice) in his person and presence, which was in no degree attractive or promising. His stature was low, and smaller than most men; his motion not graceful; and his aspect so far from inviting, that it had somewhat in it of simplicity: and his voice the worst of the three, and so untuned, that instead of reconciling, it offended the ears, so that no body would have expected music from that tongue. And sure no man was less beholden to nature for its recommendation into the world, but then no man sooner, or more, disappointed this general and customary prejudice. That little person and small stature was quickly found to contain

a great heart, a courage so keen, and a nature so fearless, that no composition of the strongest limbs, and most harmonious and proportioned presence and strength, ever more disposed any man to the greatest enterprise; it being his greatest weakness to be too solicitous for such adventures; and that untuned tongue, and voice, easily discovered itself to be supplied and governed by a mind and understanding so excellent, that the wit and weight of all he said carried another kind of lustre and admiration in it, and even another kind of acceptation from the persons present, than any ornament of delivery could reasonably promise itself, or is usually attended with; and his disposition and nature was so gentle and obliging, so much delighted in courtesy, kindness, and generosity, that all mankind could not but admire and love him."

After this extract from lord chancellor Clarendon, I beg leave to address myself to all little men, who are desirous to become great and wonderful, like Sir Lucius, entreating them to meditate attentively, for that end, on the following maxim of that other great chancellor, lord Bacon; which maxim may also serve as a sort of moral to this long paper on a short man: "Whosoever hath any thing fixed in his person

that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn."

THE GENIUS, No. 2, Saturday, June 20, 1761.

Mr. Colman, the author of this very humorous paper on little men, and who was, as he represents himself, in the character of the genius, not much more than five feet in height, might, had he survived a few years longer, have enrolled in his list of wonderful men of low stature, the present tyrant of the continent; who, however atrocious in a moral and political light, must be allowed, even by those who detest him most, to be a warrior of consummate skill.

To the many energetic passages on British liberty, which the power and subtlety of this inveterate foe to the constitution of our country have called forth, I beg leave to add one from a poem just published under the title of "the Sabine Farm," the production of Robert Bradstreet, Esq.; lines that appear to me, both in strength and spirit, equal to any which the sacred fire of freedom has inspired:

Not vainly Hampden, Russel, Sidney bled—
Sweet is their rest on yon ethereal bed!
Britons are Britons still; and dare not yield
The charter which their patriot blood has seal'd!
Britons are Britons still; revere the throne;
Guard all its rights—yet vindicate their own!
What though an honest yet misguided few
Would Anarchy, in Freedom's garb, pursue—
What though Corruption's foul and venal charms,
Allure infected numbers to her arms—
The general heart is sound: the general cry
Rings over ocean, "Death, or Liberty!"
Upon his steel-girt throne, with secret fear,
Gaul's bloody tyrant starts, that shout to hear:
And Europe's crouching realms with envy see,
One monarch reigning, and one people free.

No. CII.

—Qui vitæ servaret munia recto
More; bonus sane vicinus, amabilis hospes,
Comis in uxorem, posset qui ignoscere servis,
Et signo læso non insanire lagenæ.

HORAT.

In every walk of life his conduct scan,
Good humour, frank and honest, marks the man:
Good neighbour, good companion, husband kind,
And to a servant's failings often blind;
Ne'er paying, by a sottish frenzy led,
A broken bottle with a broken head.

COLMAN.

OF all the qualifications of the mind, which are not positive virtues, I do not know any that is more desirable than good humour. No quality renders the possessor more easy and happy in himself, or recommends him more forcibly to other people. Virtue itself receives additional lustre, abates the rigid severity of its character, and takes its most ravishing graces and embellishments from such a disposition; a disposition so amiable in its nature, that even a man of loose principles, when of so agreeable a turn, often conciliates to himself many friends and well-wishers. The men, at least, allow that he is a pleasant fellow, court his company, and account him

nobody's enemy but his own; while the women call him a dear agreeable creature, and declare that though, to be sure, he is a wild devil, it is quite impossible to be angry with him.

It is hardly saying too much in favour of this quality, to assert that it is one of the first requisites in society; for though strict honour and integrity are of more essential value in the grand purposes of human life, yet good humour, like small money, is of more immediate use in the common commerce of the world. There is no situation in life, no engagement in business, or party in pleasure, wherein it will not contribute to mitigate disappointments, or heighten enjoyment. A husband, friend, acquaintance, master, or even servant, however faithful or affectionate, will occasion many miserable hours to himself, as well as to those with whom he is connected, if his virtues are not seasoned with good humour; and whether he is a partner for life, or a partner in a country dance, an associate in great and mighty undertakings, or a companion in a post-chaise, he should, on every occasion, cherish and keep alive this agreeable disposition. Some persons may almost be said to be of a good-humoured complexion, and seem to be constitutionally endued with this amiable turn of mind: a blessing for which they may

thank heaven with the same kind of gratitude that he ought to feel who experiences the comforts of being born in a delightful and temperate climate. My fellow-countrymen, I think, are many of them deficient in that airy pleasantness, and cheerful temper, that distinguishes this quality: and as our climate, while it answers all the purposes of use and plenty, yet seldom affords us blue skies, or tempts us to cool grots and purling streams, to lie down on the damp grass, or to those other rural delights so often mentioned by the poets; so the English themselves, though overflowing with humanity and benevolence, suffer clouds of gloomy thoughts to come over their minds, and, however they must be allowed to be good-natured, are seldom remarkable for being good-humoured. Yet this half virtue is worth cultivation, as it bestows new charms on that real one. Good humour is the fair weather of the soul, that calms the turbulent gusts of passion, and diffuses a perpetual gladness and serenity over the heart; and he that finds his temper naturally inclined to break out into sudden bursts of fretfulness and ill humour, should be as much upon his guard to repress the storm that is for ever beating in his mind, as to fence against the inclemencies of the season. We are naturally attach-

ed even to animals that betray a softness of disposition. We are pleased with the awkward fondness and fidelity of a dog: Montaigne could discover agreeable music in the good-humoured purring of his cat: and though our modern grooms and jockies bestow all their attention on make, colour, eyes, and feet, yet the best writers on horsemanship consider a good temper as one of the best qualities in a horse.

We should be the more attentive to encourage and preserve this pleasing quality, because many people lose it by little and little in the progress of their lives. The thought of interest frequently proves a growing rust and canker in the mind; and the many troubles and embarrassments attending worldly pursuits, often sour the temper, and entirely destroy the spirit of cheerfulness and good humour that prevailed in the artless and undesigning season of our youth. I do not know a more disagreeable companion, than a man who, having set out in life with vast and vain hopes of advancement, together with a mighty consciousness of his own merit, has not been able to sustain the shock of disappointment, but has permitted his misfortunes to embitter his disposition. Such a man overflows with gall on every occasion, and discharges the spleen, that rises within him, on all his fellow-

creatures. He disturbs the peace of the family to which he belongs, and poisons the happiness of every company to which he is admitted. But the disquiet that he brings with him, wherever he comes, is nothing but an evidence of his own misery and weakness of soul. How much more is he to be imitated, who meets the strokes of fortune with an even temper, who suffers neither reproach nor distress to ruffle his good humour, and is, as Hamlet describes his friend, "As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing." Life is like a game at backgammon; and if an unlucky throw comes, we must make the best of it, and play on without grumbling at our ill luck; but who would venture to sit down to the table with a man who could not bear an adverse cast without turning over the board in a fury and throwing the dice-box at the head of his companion? The character of Sir Thomas More, though peculiarly illustrious for unshaken integrity, was in no instance more winning and amiable than in true pleasantry and good humour. His cheerful behaviour on the scaffold, and in every particular relative to his death, is familiar to all; but there is no circumstance in which the evenness of his mind is more truly delineated, than his behaviour to his family on his resignation of the chancellorship. The way

in which he discovered it to his wife bespoke the most genuine good humour. When he went out of church it was always usual for some of his officers to go to his lady and acquaint her of his departure: but the Sunday after his resignation, he went himself up to her pew, and, bowing, gravely said, "Madam, my lord is gone." She, who was accustomed to the facetiousness of his manner, did not immediately comprehend his meaning; but on his explaining the matter to her, as they went home, she began to upbraid him for his shameful inattention to his interest: upon which, without being at all disconcerted by this conjugal lecture, he took occasion to turn the discourse, by finding fault with some part of her dress.—This absolute command of temper, and pleasant vein, is surely to be envied; and he who sees the goods of fortune fall from him, not only without shaking his fortitude, but also without abating the gaiety of his heart, may fairly be said to possess an uncommon share of good humour.

Surly is a man of an easy fortune, humane and benevolent in his nature, and, as Dogberry says, "honest as the skin between his brows;" but he has contracted a kind of habitual peevishness, and every common occasion of life affords him

matter of offence. The instant he rises in the morning he is disquieted with the appearance of the weather, and pours forth execrations on the climate; and when he sits down to breakfast, the water is smoked, the butter rank, the bread heavy, the newspaper dull and insipid, and his servant sulky or impertinent: yet all the while he has no malice in his mind, and means no harm to any creature in the world. He has a thousand good qualities, which the quickness of his temper converts into petulance and ill humour. He is a great lover of wit, but cannot bear the least piece of pleasantry on himself; and the most innocent jest touches him to the quick. He will bestow twenty pounds in an act of charity, or do the kindest offices to serve an acquaintance in distress, and next moment quarrel with his friend for disturbing his reflections by humming an opera tune. Thus Surly lives, much esteemed, and little beloved; and though every body thinks well of him, there are very few that care to cultivate his acquaintance.

But if the want of good humour is so conspicuous in a man, of how many charms does it deprive one of the other sex! softness is their distinguishing characteristic; but though, like

milk, they are naturally smooth, yet, like milk, they create particular disgust when they turn sour. No female character is more offensive than a shrew, and the impolite spirit of the English law has provided very rough treatment for termagants, and prepared the severest discipline for the cure of a scold. The greatest reproach on an old maid, that character so much dreaded and ridiculed in the female world, is her ill humour; and crossness is the worst part of a prude. On the contrary, good humour, like the cestus, encircles the fair one with new beauties, and is an antidote to the ravages of age and the small-pox. It is the best part of the portion with a virtuous wife, and a most amiable feature in the face of a queen.

Among our own sex, there is no race of men more apt to indulge a spirit of acrimony, and to remit their natural good-humour, than authors. They come abroad, indeed, with a consummate self-satisfaction and delight; but the least shock given to their vanity taints the mind and converts all their pleasantry to rancour. The flame of emulation often kindles into envy; and these mettlesome gentlemen press so furiously onward to the goal of fame, that they are sometimes driven to the necessity of jostling one

another in the course. For my part, I would rather choose to consider myself on a journey than in a race; and surely it is better and pleasanter to jog on in an easy trot, regardless who is left behind, or who is gone before, than to whip and spur a jaded genius, and, in the heat of furious spleen and blind rage, to be carried perhaps on the wrong side of the post.

Good humour is the happiest state of mind for a writer, as well as for any other man. Why should an author suffer every hornet of the press to ruffle his temper, or dip his pen in gall, and prepare wormwood draughts to sweeten the ill blood of a cotemporary? He that causelessly and malignantly traduces another, writes a libel on himself; as the highwayman, who makes an attack upon the road, is, in fact, a greater enemy to himself than to the harmless traveller: such a poor wretch, we know, as well as the rest of the gang, will be brought to justice sooner or later; but nobody cares to have their deaths lie at his own door. Even the muse of Satire should possess her graces: and her productions, like the sweet-briar, should delight and refresh the senses by their fragrance, while they are armed for our annoyance. If we cannot exercise the instruments of wit, we can, at

least, lay by the weapons of offence and ill nature; and the candour of the British public will always countenance the faintest efforts to rally the reigning vices and foibles of the age with cheerfulness, pleasantry, and good humour.

THE GENIUS, No 12, Thursday, Nov. 19, 1761.

No. CIII.

Nil prodest quod non lædere possit idem.
OVID.

No virtue springs in man's immortal soul,
But tends to vice if urged beyond controul.

It sometimes happens that men who make the most dangerous deviations from the laws of society and the principles of virtue, in a great measure, owe their crimes to the very benevolence of their hearts; and that, in the midst of all their guilt, we find a dignity of soul which commands our highest admiration.

Frank Leeson was the son of a country gentleman in Ireland, who possessed a little estate of about 300 pounds a year, but who, with that liberality of sentiment so particularly the characteristic of his nation, gave into a hospitality rather beyond the power of his circumstances, and, in promoting the happiness of his friends, too frequently forgot a necessary attention to his own: the consequence may be easily foreseen by the intelligent reader: old Mr. Leeson was involved in perpetual difficulties, and was upon the eve of being thrown into prison, when he was saved from a disgrace of that nature by the extraordi-

nary piety of his son. Frank to a very excellent understanding, joined a very amiable person; on which account a young lady with an independent fortune of 8000 *l.* had long beheld him with a favourable eye; but Frank, being attached to another whose beauty and merit were her only recommendations, had hitherto declined to profit by this lady's partiality; however, when he saw there was no other method of saving an infirm father and mother from poverty and bondage, the force of his filial affection got the better of his love; he tore himself from the woman of his soul, and married the eight thousand pounds: with this money he paid off all the old gentleman's debts, and entered the world with a degree of reputation, considerably superior to the generality of his acquaintance.

As nothing could separate Frank and his father, the old couple and the young lived for some time in the most perfect state of harmony under the same roof; and the severity of their former situation producing a necessary regulation in their expenses, they were every day rising no less in opulence than in felicity, when an unexpected misfortune left them, in the moment of the utmost security, without shelter and without bread: old Mr. Leeson, finding his health very much impaired, and conceiving a

disgust, moreover, at the part in which he resided, because his friends had not formerly been so ready to assist him in his necessities as he had reason to expect, resolved, with the concurrence of his son, to dispose of his estate, and to make an adequate purchase in the neighbourhood of Dublin, where he might have an opportunity of consulting the best physicians, and establishing a more agreeable circle of acquaintance. Pursuant to this plan, he sold every acre he possessed, had the purchase-money home in bills, and was preparing to set off for another part of the kingdom in a day or two, when an accidental fire reduced his habitation to a heap of ashes, destroyed all his effects, and gave him scarcely a moment more than was absolutely necessary for the preservation of his family. Frank, whose whole property was also in bills, and packed up ready for the intended departure, lost all in the general calamity; and was obliged together with his father, his mother, and his wife, to take refuge at a neighbouring gentleman's for a few days, till they were in a capacity of reaching the metropolis; where Frank expected, from some letters which he obtained to the lord lieutenant, to procure a little establishment either in the army or the public offices.

On the arrival of our unfortunate family in town, young Mr. Leeson applied himself industriously to profit by his recommendations; but, alas, though he met with civility, he could obtain no relief; every fresh application gave him nothing but fresh occasion to lament the miserable prospect before him; and while he was continually cheering every bosom at home with the speedy expectation of halcyon days, he had nothing but despair in his own. At length destruction became too evident to be concealed: his father, who was now confined to his bed, had been a whole day without sustenance, and young Mrs. Leeson was every hour trembling, lest the pains of parturiency should oblige her to solicit the charitable assistance of the public; thus situated, torn with a thousand pangs, for a wife who possessed his highest esteem; for a father whom he almost worshipped, and a mother whom he tenderly loved; Frank sallied out one evening into the streets, and stopping a gentleman, whose appearance indicated opulence, he demanded his money with such a wildness of accent, that the gentleman, terrified out of his wits, immediately gave him a purse of fifty guineas, and Frank eagerly retreated to his lodgings, depositing the money with his father, and telling him he had received it from the lord lieutenant's order, as an earnest only of future obligations.

The family at home, not doubting the truth of this relation, poured out their whole souls in acknowledgement of the viceroy's goodness, and once more refreshed themselves with a comfortable repast.

Next morning, however, the robbery became noised abroad, and, to the great surprise of every body, a merchant of the first character and fortune was apprehended for the fact, and lodged in Newgate; on the earliest knowledge of this circumstance, Frank immediately wrote to the innocent gentleman, desiring him to be under no apprehension; for if he was not honourably acquitted, the person actually guilty would, on the day of trial, appear in court, acknowledge his crime, and surrender himself to the violated laws of his country. The gentleman naturally read this letter to every body; but, though such as were his friends talked of it as a most extraordinary affair, the generality of people considered it as a despicable artifice calculated to impose on the credulity of the public. However, the day of trial at last came; and notwithstanding the merchant's character appeared irreproachable before this unfortunate stain; notwithstanding several personages of the highest figure, proved him a man remarkably nice in his principles and opulent in his circumstances; the prosecutor was so positive in his charge, and a

number of circumstances so surprisingly concurred, that he was actually convicted; and the judge proceeding to sentence, when a loud noise of "make way" ran through the court, and young Mr. Leeson, with a manly, yet, modest countenance, rushing forward, demanded to be heard, and delivered himself to the following effect:—

"You see before you, my lord, an unhappy young man, who once little thought of violating the laws of his country, and who wished rather to be the friend, than the enemy of society: but who knows to what he may be urged in the hour of a piercing calamity; to what he may be wrought when destitute of friends, and destitute of bread? I, my lord, was born a gentleman and bred one: six months ago I was master of an easy fortune; but an accidental fire in a moment reduced me to beggary, and, what still more distressed me, reduced also an infirm and excellent father, an aged and tender mother, together with the best of women and the best of wives, to the same lamentable situation. Encouraged by some recommendations to the great, we came up to town, and expected a decent means of procuring a subsistence; but alas, my lord, those who want compassion most, are those who are most commonly disregarded; instead of assistance we received

compliments, and met with a bow of a frigid politeness, where we looked for the bounteous hand of relief; so that, in a little time, our all was totally exhausted, and my unhappy father with the venerable partner of his youth were above a day without any sustenance whatsoever, when, unable to see them expiring for food, I rushed forth, and committed the robbery for which this gentleman, now prisoner at the bar, has been condemned.

"This was not the whole of my affliction: a fond deserving wife, who had brought me a plentiful fortune, lay also perishing with hunger, and that too in a situation which demanded the tenderest attention, and the most immediate regard. Such, my lord, were my motives for that unjustifiable action. Had the gentleman condemned been happily acquitted, I had not made this publick acknowledgement of my guilt: Heaven only knows what I have suffered during his confinement; but the empire of the universe would not bribe me to injure him farther, nor tempt me, by an infamous sacrifice of his life, to consult the safety of my own. Here then, my lord, I claim his sentence and demand his bonds. Providence will, I doubt not, now take care of my innocent family, who are equally ignorant of my crime and my self-accusation. For

my own part, I am resigned; and I feel nothing in consequence of my approaching fate, but from what I am sensible my miserable friends must suffer on my account."

Here Mr. Leeson ended, and the whole court was lost in approbation and tears. He was, however condemned, but pardoned the same day; and his character suffered so little upon this occasion, that the lord-lieutenant gave him, with his life, a place of seven hundred pounds a year; while the merchant, who had been accused from resembling him excessively, dying sometime after, without issue, left him his whole fortune, as a reward for so exemplary an act of justice and generosity.

THE BABBLER, No. 116.

The association of circumstances in this pathetic story, which fixed the crime of Mr. Leeson on the innocent merchant, has had, I believe, many counterparts in the annals of criminal law: the following detail, however, in which a highly probable and natural association of events was fabricated for the purposes of deception, and with complete success, is perhaps without a parallel.

"A stranger, well mounted, and attended with a rich livery, one morning, in the month of July, entered a market town in Somersetshire, where the assizes were then held; and, having put up at one of the principal inns, inquired of the landlord as to the curiosities and amusements of the place. Boniface, who was extremely well qualified to answer these inquiries, assured him, with a low bow, that there was no want of entertainment, as the players were in the town, and

moreover that it was "size time;" accompanying his remarks with a recommendation, that the gentleman should by all means go to hear the trials that morning, as a highwayman was to be brought up. The stranger made some objections to this invitation, upon the ground of his being unknown, and the little chance he stood of meeting with proper accommodation. This difficulty was, however, removed by the loquacious landlord assuring him that a gentleman of his appearance would be readily admitted. Indeed, to make it more certain, he attended him to the court-house, and represented him in such a way to his friends, the judges' clerks, that he obtained a seat at a little distance from the judge, just as the poor highwayman was about to make his defence. The appearance of the stranger, who was of elegant person and polished manners, arrested, for a moment, the attention of the court, till the prisoner was asked if he had any thing to say. The poor culprit assured the judge that he was not guilty of the robbery, and that, if he knew where to find them, there were people who could prove a clear alibi. At this moment the poor wretch happened to catch sight of the stranger; when he exclaimed, with a degree of frantic joy, "Can it be possible!" and fell backwards on the floor. He was, however, with some difficulty, recovered. When the judge humanely inquired into the cause of his extravagant behaviour, the poor wretch answered, with tears in his eyes, "Oh, my lord, how providential! that gentleman on your left hand can prove my alibi." "How!" replied the judge; "is this true? or is it merely a vain pretext to procrastinate the just sentence of the law? Pray, sir, let me ask you (continued his lordship, addressing himself to the stranger), do you know any thing of this man?" Upon this the traveller surveyed the criminal with the most scrupulous attention; and then said, "I am sorry to assure your lordship, that I do not know the prisoner." "I thought as much," replied the judge; "it is mere trifling with justice." The prisoner, however, still insisted that the stranger knew him; and the stranger again as positively denied the assertion; till the judge, displeased at his presump-

tion, was about to receive the verdict of the jury. The culprit now, on his knees, entreated permission to say one word. "Indeed, my lord," cried he, "the gentleman does know me, though he may have forgotten my person. Only give me leave to ask him three questions, and it will save my life." The judge humanely consented, and the curiosity of the court was excited. "Pray, sir," cried the prisoner, addressing himself to the stranger, "did not you land at Dover about a twelvemonth since?" "I believe I might," replied the gentleman. "And pray, sir, do you not recollect that a man in a sailor's jacket, carried your trunk from the beach to the tavern?" "I can't say that I remember it," returned the stranger; "but it might possibly be so." At these words the prisoner, not disheartened at the difficulties he had met with, pulled off his wig, and again interrogated the stranger: "Do you not, Sir, remember, that the man who carried your trunk on that day, shewed you a scar he had got on his head in fighting for his king and country; and that he related the particulars of the action in which he was wounded? This is the same scar; look at it." "Good God!" exclaimed the stranger; "I do, indeed, perfectly remember the circumstance, and have every reason to believe this to be the man, though I had entirely forgotten his face: but, my lord," added the stranger, "I can put it to a certainty, for I have a memorandum of the day I arrived at Dover from Calais." The date was compared with the day laid in the indictment, and found to be the same. The whole court felt the impression, and joy was visible in every face; when, after swearing and examining the gentleman as to his name and place of abode, the foreman of the jury pronounced, Not Guilty.

"A few evenings only had elapsed, when the prisoner, the stranger, and his livery-servant, were taken up on the road in their original capacities of experienced highwaymen."

BREWER'S HOURS OF LEISURE, No. 8, p. 56, et seq.

No. CIV.

"Mr. John Wynn Baker, F.R.S. having practised, with the greatest success, a method of preventing the fatal effects attending cattle when swelled with eating clover, does, at the desire of the Dublin Society, invite any number of gentlemen of the different counties, to attend at his house at Laughlintown, near Celbridge, early on Tuesday the 12th of this inst. June, 1771; when he will, for the satisfaction and information of the public, shew them the certain good consequences arising from the above method, by turning a beast or two in perfect health into clover, in order to swell them, and he will then instantaneously relieve them according to his method, in the presence of such gentlemen as may be upon the spot.—Any farmer, or poor man who has cattle, shall be welcome to attend the operation." From the several Dublin Papers.

To the Right Hon. William Beckford, Esq.
Lord Mayor of London.

My Lord,

My character in the literary world must be

my apology to your lordship for the freedom of this address.—Let me therefore recommend to your serious attention, the ingenious Mr. Baker's method of curing cows which have been surfeited by feeding on clover. As the gradation between the horned species and aldermen is scarce perceptible, I fancy that gentleman might be of infinite service at the London tavern.

I am so well acquainted with your patriotism and public spirit, that I depend, with confidence, on your lordship's patronage in favour of Mr. Baker: by your animating encouragement, the arts and sciences flourish in all parts of the British empire. Let it be your boast, my lord, to call forth merit from obscurity. Mr. Baker is now solely employed in preserving the lives of a few Irish cows that deserve to suffer for their gluttony, when I sincerely think, without compliment, that preserving half a dozen patriotic aldermen is of more consequence to the community.

Your lordship is wise from experience; you have seen much of the world, and therefore must know, that the season for green peas, and other flatulent vegetables, is fatal to many of your brethren, and causes many vacancies at your council board. At this critical period, my lord, the sudden deaths of men of genius

may be attended with pernicious effects: the pillars of our constitution may be snatched away by a dish of artichokes, and a plate of beans may occasion the fall of our stocks.

I therefore humbly entreat your lordship to call a meeting of the livery of London, to draw up an address and petition to the Dublin society, that they may instantly order Mr. Baker to attend you: it will signalise the æra of your lordship's mayoralty to latest posterity, if you exert your influence to procure that gentleman an adequate pension out of the city revenues.

Mr. Baker's method of curing cows is by introducing the point of a knife between their ribs.—Do not be alarmed, my lord; it is no more than the prick of a lancet, I assure you.—Call him, then, from this sordid employment, and let him exert his skill for the preservation of his own species. Let it be his constant business to attend at every turtle feast with his chirurgical knife, and when any of the guests shew the least symptoms of indigestion, let him proceed to business. The wind confined by repletion, which often occasions apoplexies, vertigoes, and other aldermanic complaints, will instantly evaporate, and leave the patient in perfect health.—A familiar instance will brighten your lordship's perception, and give you a

clearer idea of this operation, than a tedious physical discussion. In the course of your lordship's observations, you must often have seen a vent-peg applied to a cask of porter to prevent its bursting: the case is exactly similar; and, indeed, I heard a great natural philosopher (L—d M—a, F.R.S.) say that Mr. Baker took the hint from this trivial circumstance; like Sir Isaac Newton, who founded his noble system of attraction on observing an apple fall to the ground.

It is Doctor Swift's opinion, that "whoever could make two ears of corn, or two blades of grass, to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind than the whole race of politicians." This Mr. Baker can effect, my lord; but, what is infinitely more interesting to your lordship, and the whole livery, he can also enable every citizen to eat two custards instead of one, without any danger of bursting.—Surely then he deserves to be amply rewarded!

Time, my lord, has introduced a strange revolution in the manners of the citizens. In a fanatic age, grievances and apprehensions produced fasting and mortification; but your patriots support their spirits by fasting, and eat

in proportion to their zeal: an additional motive, my lord, to encourage Mr. Baker. Mrs. Macaulay could inform your lordship that the man who had saved the life of a Roman citizen was rewarded with a civic crown. Revive this custom, my lord, in honour of Mr. Baker; for, I dare say, he will preserve the lives of many illustrious citizens this season.

However your lordship may be prejudiced against the Irish, I assure you there are many ingenious men in this country, who gain a comfortable livelihood by cutting open the skins of sheep, and stealing their tallow. The operation is not very dangerous; for those gentle animals feed immediately after with an excellent appetite; and your lordship knows, that is the surest test of a patient's recovery. Now, by reasoning from analogy, we may safely conclude, that the same experiment will equally succeed on sheep, aldermen, and all lethargic citizens: I therefore think you should engage some of those heaven-taught surgeons to accompany Mr. Baker. By this means, a large supply of tallow may be easily obtained, and the price of candles speedily reduced; and thus your lordship will enjoy the heart-felt satisfaction of redressing one of the national grievances, without hazard-

ing a revolution. It is my boast, my lord, and I glory in the invention, that I am the first projector, who ever pointed out a rational scheme to render the fat of the citizens of service to the nation.—This gives unspeakable satisfaction, as an overgrown, unwieldy citizen has long been a subject of ridicule; for Cato, jesting on one of the aldermen of Rome, asked, "of what use a body could be to the republic, that was all belly?"

I hope your lordship will approve of my proposal; such a generous encouragement of the natives of this kingdom will do you great honour, and will most effectually expose the falsity and severity of Mr. Kelly's reflections on your lordship, for mentioning his countrymen with seeming disrespect. You have been accused of ill-nature and cruelty; yet, I dare say, if you had Mr. Kelly among your herd of slaves in Jamaica, you would give him most convincing proofs of your lenity and moderation. He also insinuates, that good nature should compose one part of your lordship's character, because folly is the proper soil for that milky plant to grow in: but poets, my lord, are seldom good philosophers.—Goose-grease, indeed, is endued with a healing medicinal quality; but Mr. Kelly

should not draw too hasty a conclusion from this, and expect to find good-nature and folly always united in the same person.

I am, with respect,
My lord,
Your lordship's most obedient
Humble servant,
JEOFFRY WAGSTAFFE.

THE BACHELOR, No. 1.

No. CV.

Obscurata diu populo bonus eruet, atque
Proferet in lucem speciosa vocabula rerum,
Quæ priscis memorata Catonibus atque Cethegis,
Nunc situs informis premit, et deserta vetustas.
Adsciscet nova, quæ genitor produxerit usus:
Vehemens, et liquidus, puroque simillimus amni,
Fundet opes, Latiumque beabit divite linguâ.
HORAT.

Mark where a bold expressive phrase appears,
Bright through the rubbish of a thousand years;
Command old words that long have slept, to wake,
Words that wise Bacon, or brave Raleigh spake;
Or bid the new be English, ages hence
(For use will foster what's begot by sense);
Pour the rich tide of eloquence along,
Lucid and pure, yet vehement and strong,
With all the treasures of the mother tongue.
POPE and COLMAN.

LEARNING, like beaten gold, in proportion to its being more extended, becomes more superficial. Gross ignorance, and profound erudition, are now equally uncommon. Literature, no longer confined to colleges and cloisters, mixes itself, in some measure, with the commerce of the exchange, the exercises of the camp, and the graces of the court: but the deep-read scholar is a rarer character than ever. The main stream of science, branching into numberless rivulets, grows shallow as well as clear. The stores of learning

are parcelled out by retail; and what was sarcastically said of the reputed knowledge of our northern neighbours, is nearly applicable to that of the whole island: every man has a mouthful, but no man has a bellyful.

This observation on the state of learning in general, is almost equally true in respect to the lesser graces of style and composition: that happy mediocrity denied by gods and men to the writers of former ages, has been reserved for our own period. Few writers are barbarous and ungrammatical, or even unmusical in their language; but very few are truly simple, nervous, or elegant. Some styles, like handsome faces, are spoiled by affectation, or ruined by varnish and extrinsic ornament; some are bloated with false pomp; some darkened by metaphysical abstract phraseology; and some enervated by dapper familiarities, and the cant jargon of drawing-rooms, horse-courses, and gaming-tables.

Purity of style, like purity of manners, is not wholly practicable: languages, like men by whom they are framed, will be imperfect; yet every endeavour to trace the sources of corruption, tends to stop its progress. Living authors, as well as living manners, are at once the chief objects of our censure and imitation.

The works of deceased writers, which we have been taught by tradition to applaud, are too seldom turned over; while the productions of our cotemporaries present themselves to our notice oftener than their persons. He who has talents to distinguish himself from the crowd, has more followers than an ancient philosopher. A popular writer sets the fashion of style, and the very herd of critics that wish to depreciate the value of his works run after him. If an author arises, whose deep learning and large imagination, struggling for expression equal to his conception, tempt him to lengthen his periods, and swell his phraseology; if an intimate familiarity with the combinations of a dead language, now and then betray him into too wide a deviation from the vernacular idiom; such a writer will have the mortification to see the beauties of his style distorted by awkward imitation, and his errors (if in him they are errors) made ridiculous by aggravation. The language that, in his master-hand, like a well-tuned instrument, "discourses most eloquent music," under their management utters nothing but discord. The rattling of their periods and tumidity of their phrases, like the noise of a drum, or swell of a bladder, are but symptoms of their wind and emptiness.

Ornament of diction, says Quintilian, though the greatest of beauties, is only graceful when it follows as it were of itself, not when it is pursued. Of all ornaments, a foreign structure of period, as it is the most prejudicial to the genius of our language, appears the most studied and unnatural. An adopted word is but a partial and trifling innovation, and is often happily incorporated, when care is taken to naturalise the foreigner, by giving a national air to the turn of the phrase. Every language, more especially the English, has its idioms, which we should not register, with grammarians and lexicographers, among its irregularities, but, with poets and orators, number among its beauties. To extirpate idiom from our tongue, would be like rooting up the old oaks that are the glory and ornament of our country; or, to vary the allusion, to square the language of our ancient writers to the rigid rules of Roman, or even French syntax, would extinguish the genius of our tongue, and give the whole a foreign air; like the labours of a tasteless improver, exchanging the luxuriance of nature, in our gardens, for clipped yews, straight walks, and formal parterres.

Perspicuity without meanness is pronounced by Aristotle to be the perfection of language,

or, as he more nervously expresses it, the virtue of style; to attain which, he recommends, as a principal instrument, the use of the most common words and phrases in a figurative signification; the familiarity of the terms rendering them clear, and the novelty of their application giving them an air of elegance or dignity. The works of our old writers, prosaick as well as poetical, abound with these home-spun metaphors, by which the lowest words increase their consequence, or, at least, like ciphers, raise the value of their neighbours. Sometimes, indeed, these popular tropes are carried to excess, or used too licentiously; yet they commonly breathe a magnificent simplicity, and the whole construction is purely English; a circumstance, like that which induced Cicero to recommend the study of the ancient Roman authors, to his pupils in oratory; urging, that whoever was well read in their productions could not, were he even inclined to it, speak other than genuine Latin.

It will not, I hope, be imagined, from what I have said, that I think too lightly of the labour and genius of those learned philologists, who, by compiling grammars and dictionaries, have endeavoured to give precision and stability to our tongue. Their works, if properly consulted,

are useful both to learner and proficient; but if made the objects of their study, rather than occasional assistants, they will certainly be pernicious. The grammars of living and dead languages are too often framed on different principles: in the latter, all irregularities, for which an authority can be pleaded, are sanctified by a rule: while the other brands every idiom, or bold combination, as a licentious barbarism. No man ever learned a language, living or dead, from a grammar or dictionary, but by reading the best authors, and partaking of the best conversation. He, who habituates himself to such studies and such society, without proposing to himself a particular model, will insensibly form a style of his own; as, in the mechanical part of writing, every man abandoning himself to his own fancy or powers, almost every man writes a different hand. A certain freedom of style, a manly flow of language, will distinguish the authors of such a school; whose periods will not be divided into formal compartments, like the squares of a Mosaick pavement, exactly answering each other; but the members of a sentence, like the members of the human body, will seem to be put together with ease as well as symmetry, and equally framed for the purposes of elegance and strength.

As to grammars and dictionaries, though not administering to the foundation of our tongue, they may certainly be of great use to contribute to its preservation. They are a kind of scaffold erected by skilful workmen, after our language has been completely built, to repair the ruins of time, and to keep the venerable structure from farther decay. The last great English dictionary will remain, as long as the English tongue shall remain, a monument of the learning and genius of its author; and I cannot better enforce the utility of the studies recommended in this paper, than by concluding it with an extract from the admirable preface to that work; a preface which at once delivers the precepts, and affords the example, of a pure and eloquent style.

"I have studiously endeavoured to collect examples and authorities from the writers before the restoration, whose works I regard as the wells of English undefiled, as the pure sources of genuine diction. Our language, for almost a century, has, by the concurrence of many causes, been gradually departing from its original Teutonick character, and deviating towards a Gallick structure and phraseology, from which it ought to be our endeavour to recall it, by making our ancient volumes the groundwork of style, admitting among the additions of

later times, only such as may supply real deficiencies, such as are readily adopted by the genius of our tongue, and incorporate easily with our native idioms.

"From the authors which rose in the time of Elizabeth, a speech might be formed adequate to all the purposes of use and elegance. If the language of theology were extracted from Hooker, and the translation of the Bible; the terms of natural knowledge from Bacon; the phrases of policy, war, and navigation, from Raleigh; the dialect of poetry and fiction from Spenser and Sidney; and the diction of common life from Shakspeare;—few ideas would be lost to mankind, for want of English words in which they might be expressed."

THE GENTLEMAN, No. 3, Wednesday, July 26, 1775.

No. CVI.

Ambto quæramus seria ludo.
HORAT.

Let us lay aside mirth, and be serious.

UNFASHIONABLE soever as it may be to enter upon religious subjects in such an age as the present, there are some who, I flatter myself, will nevertheless pay attention to a topic of such importance without a blush, and think it no disgrace, either to their gentility or their understanding, to employ a few moments in the consideration of some points, for which, at the awful period of their dissolution, eternities upon eternities will hardly seem too much.

When we consider the differences which daily subsist in the various modes or systems of the Christian religion, and think upon the inflexible partiality which every man entertains in favour of his own, we ought to be absolutely certain that the particular form which each of us glories to possess, is perfectly conformable to our notions of the Deity, and consistent, in the minutest degree, with those divine lessons which were inculcated by the Saviour of the world, in his

mysterious mission to man. If we are not positive in this, let our belief be distinguished by what name soever we think proper, let us be protestants or papists, quakers or presbyterians, I can take upon me to aver, that we have no right to the name of Christians, and may, with equal propriety, take a lesson from the Alcoran as the Gospel.

It is not the ceremony used at baptism, the sprinkling of water, nor the promises of our parents in the presence of God, which constitute the Christian; no, it is an actual conformity to the precepts of our blessed Lord, and an undeviating obedience to the tenets which are laid down in the history of his life and miracles. Nothing can be more absurd, nor in reality more criminal, than for a man to aspire at the glorious title of a Christian, who is regardless of the duties which that appellation renders indispensably necessary, or a stranger to the obligations which are particularly enjoined by the name; it is at once a fatal deception of his own most important expectations, an insult to his Saviour, and a defiance of his God.

With what propriety, shall I beg leave to ask, can the various sects of religion in this kingdom call themselves Christians, when, in the unremitting hatred which they constantly entertain

towards one another, they utterly destroy that universal principle of charity, which ought to be the foundation, nay, the very essence, of their belief. With what propriety can he who is blest with unbounded affluence, style himself a Christian, if his ear is turned away from the sight of affliction, or his heart unaffected with the tear of distress. Christianity obliges him to a constant relief of the wretched; and, without a behaviour entirely consonant to the duties of his belief, what possible pretension can he have to a name that exalts him to fellowship with angels, and lifts him above the stars? Will a constant attendance on the public place of his worship exculpate the oppressor of the widow and the fatherless, or give the name of Christian to the villain who infamously lifts a dagger to the breast of his benefactor, or basely strives to murder the reputation of his friend?—Can the betrayer of unsuspecting innocence think on the pangs of some violated virgin, left without assistance, without comfort, without bread; exposed to all the upbraidings of a relentless world, to aggravate the severity of her own reflections, and possibly plunged in the additional misery of having a helpless little innocent, and an unalterable affection for the monster by whom she is so cruelly undone? I say, can the

perpetrator of an act like this, sit down calmly satisfied with the rectitude of his behaviour, and think himself as a Christian sincerely acquitted to his God? Alas, if any man thus culpable can be so presumptuously daring as to think himself a Christian, it is doubtful whether he is most a reprobate or an idiot, or whether he is most regardless or ignorant of his crimes.

In every profession of the Christian faith, there is a number of good-natured people who are always uneasy about the fate of the Mahometans, and terribly afflicted lest the ignorant savages of America should not, at the last day, be received into the favour of the supreme Being. These people entertain strange notions of the Deity, if they can suppose that a Power all-wise, all-merciful, and all-just, will require, at the hands of such ignorant nations, a knowledge which he has not thought proper to bestow: a supposition of such a nature is highly derogatory to the Divine Essence; it is a tacit implication that the great Father of the universe exercises a severity which would be cruel in his creatures but to think of; and a palpable insinuation that the Being of Beings is capable of a tyranny which would utterly degrade the meanest, in the human race, among the wonders of his hand. No, from such only as have

received much, much is expected; and perhaps at the last day, myriads of our nominal Christians, who look upon the American savage with pity and contempt, would give a hecatomb of worlds, had they power to change situations, to have so little to answer for as him: conformable to what he knows, he invariably regulates the tenor of his conduct, maintains an unalterable reverence for some great object, which he looks upon as his God, and pays an implicit obedience to his laws; whatever his system of belief may be, he endeavours to do it all the honour in his power, and shudders at nothing so much as the thought of bringing it into disgrace. Who amongst us can honestly say the same? Enlightened with the lamp of science, and the sun of true religion, our actions are a perpetual stigma on our belief; we acknowledge the wonderful mercies of a suffering Redeemer, yet are continually uttering blasphemies against his name; we own the infinite merits of his gospel, and yet act in manifest contradiction to every precept it contains. The Deity, we are sensible, can think us into ashes for the enormity of our crimes, and yet we continue to behave in open disobedience to his will; in short, both hoping and fearing the existence of another world, we sacrifice every valuable opportunity in this; and,

constantly boasting the advantages accruing from our religion, we are always acting as if we had no religion at all. Let us, therefore, instead of condemning the errors of our neighbours, begin with correcting whatever is amiss in ourselves; and, instead of finding fault with the religion of other people, be satisfied that real Christianity is the basis of our own. The whole mystery, both of religion and government, will be found in these admirable lines of Mr. Pope:

For forms of government let fools contest,
Whate'er is best administered, is best.
For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight:
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.

THE BABBLER, No. 18.



HYMN.

1.

The lark, now high soaring in air,
Salutes the first blush of the morn;
And the roses new incense prepare,
To breathe on the dew-dropping thorn;
Fresh feelings instinctively spring
In the steer, as he turns up the clod;
And creation itself seems to sing,
In the honour and glory of God.

II.

In what sensual mazes withheld,
Is man now unhappily lost!
In the rage of what passion impell'd,
On the sea of what vice is he tost?
O! instantly let him proclaim,
What the herbage all tells on the sod;
And if gratitude cannot, let shame
Awake to the praises of God.

III.

The eye of some maid in despair,
Does his perjury fatally dim;
Or some breast does he cruelly tear,
That beats, and beats only for him:
All swift as the lightning's keen blaze,
Let him humble before the dread rod;
Nor join so unhallow'd in praise,
To the honour and glory of God.

IV.

Some law does he madly defy,
Which the Being of Beings commands!
The bolt ready lifted on high
Shall dash him to dust as he stands:
In thunder Omnipotence breaks,
Fall prostrate, O wretch! at his nod;
See earth to her centre deep shakes,
All dismay'd at the voice of her God.

V.

Life's road let me cautiously view,
And no longer disdain to be wise:
But redden such paths to pursue,
As my reason should hate or despise:
To crown both my age and my youth,
Let me mark where religion has trod;
Since nothing but virtue and truth
Can reach to the throne of my God.

THE BABBLER, No. 16.

No. CVII.

Sit quodvis simplex duntaxat et unum.
HORAT.

Be what you will, so you be still the same.
ROSCOMMON.

THERE are few precepts, dictated, like the above, by judgment and experience, which, though originally confined to a particular application (as this to the formation of dramatic character), may not be adopted with success in the several branches of the same science, and even transferred into another. The direction which the poet gives us here, to preserve a regard for simplicity and uniformity, may be applied to the general design and main structure of a poem; and, if we allow them a still greater latitude of interpretation, may be found to convey a very useful rule, with respect to the inferior component parts which constitute a work.

A venerable pile of gothic architecture, viewed at a distance, or after the sober hand of time has stripped it of the false glare of meretricious ornament, communicates a sensation which the same object, under a closer inspection in its

highest degree of perfection, was incapable of producing, when the attention, solicited by a thousand minutiæ with which the hand of caprice and superstition had crowded its object, was unavoidably diverted from the contemplation of the main design.

In all points which admit of hesitation, the sister sciences are found to throw a corresponding lustre on each other. The impropriety of admitting ill-judged ornament, though connected, as in the above instance, with all that is awful and venerable, must be evident to the most superficial observer; and this circumstance should lead us to conjecture, that the same principle existed in a similar though superior science. Originality of sentiment, vivacity of thought, and loftiness of language, may conduct the reader to the end of a work, though awkwardly designed and injudiciously constructed; while the nicest adherence to poetic rule would be found insufficient to compensate for meanness of thought, or vulgarity of expression. That these two faults should infallibly destroy all title which any writer might otherwise have to the name of poet, should seem self-evident; and yet a fault which appears to be a composition of them both, has, I think, in some instances passed without reprehension; I mean al-

lusion to local circumstance: I shall therefore make this paper the vehicle of a few observations on this practice.

Nothing can be more directly adverse to the spirit of poetry, considered under one of its definitions as a universal language, than whatever confines it to the comprehension of a single people, or a particular period of time.

Blackmore, a name now grown to be a by-word in criticism, in the original structure of his poem, was little, if at all, inferior to the great prototypes of antiquity; but that simplicity and uniformity so visible in the first design, was, in every other respect, conformably to the taste of his time, violated and neglected. It is said, that the most desolate deserts of Africa are distinguished by little insulated spots clothed with perpetual verdure; and it sometimes happens, that beautiful passages present themselves in the Prince Arthur; as in the first book:

The heavens serenely smil'd, and every sail
Fill'd its broad bosom with the indulgent gale.

But when lines like these occur, we must consider it, to borrow an expression from a contemporary poet,

—— a gift no less,
Than that of manna in the wilderness.

Scriptural allusions, like the foregoing, were much in fashion among the poets of that period; and, in this particular, so earnest a follower of it was not to be left behind: he has accordingly introduced his enchanter, Merlin, building seven altars, offering up on each a bullock and a ram, and attempting to curse the army of the hero, in imitation of Balaam, and with the same success.

Dryden himself is strongly tinctured with the taste of the times; and those Dalilahs of the Town, to use his own expression, are plentifully scattered throughout his works, esteemed in the present age for those passages only in which he ventured to oppose his own taste to that of his readers, and which have already passed the ordeal of unmerited censure.

Nor is that narrowness of conception which confines a work to the comprehension of a particular portion of individuals, less reprehensible or less repugnant to the essential principles of poetry; and of this defect innumerable instances occur in both the authors above cited; with this difference, that, in one instance, we contemplate with regret the situation of an eminent genius constrained by his exigencies to postpone the powers of his own taste, and submit his judgment to the arbitrary dominion of a prevailing

mode; while, in the other, we view with indifference an author spoiled indeed by the taste of the times in which he lived, but who, had he not adopted theirs, had most probably succeeded as ill by following his own. Nothing is so common, as in both these writers to meet with expressions and allusions drawn from the meanest mechanical employments; at present infinitely disgusting to the general scholar; and (a proof of the necessity of observing the rule we have endeavoured to illustrate) to a foreigner, acquainted only with the learned part of our language, entirely unintelligible.*

In the earlier stages of civilisation, while the bonds of society hang yet loose upon the individual, before the benefits of mutual assistance and independence are felt or understood, the savage, elate with the idea of absolute independence, and unacquainted with all the advantages which accompany the arts of society, looks down with supreme contempt on a state, whose every individual is entirely dependent upon and connected with the community.† The

* I would not here be understood to hint at any similarity in the original genius of these authors: were I to draw the line of affinity, I should call Blackmore the caricatura of Dryden.

† Robertson's History of America, book iv.

wretched Esquimaux give themselves the exclusive title of men; and the Indian of North America bestows on the Europeans, as compared with himself, the epithet of the "accursed race."

In a state of absolute barbarism the arts of life are few, and, agreeably to that all-sufficiency which the savage so much affects, practised and understood by each individual. The Indian, unacquainted with the arts of polished life, is to himself, what society is to the members which compose it: he raises himself the roof of his humble hut, and ventures upon the ocean in the canoe which his own hands have hollowed; his weapons for war, or for the chase, are such as his own industry, or sometimes a casual intercourse with politer nations, have furnished for him.* The component members of barbarous societies are seldom numerous, owing to the extreme difficulty which attends the education of infancy among the hazards and hardships of savage life, and, joined to it, produces that extreme tenderness which all uncivilized communities entertain for the life of an individual. Where the numbers are comparatively few, the principle of patriotism is concentrated—the loss or misconduct of a North

* Robertson's History of America, book iv.

American Indian would be more sensibly felt by his tribe, than that of a thousand Englishmen by the parent country.

It remains, after a consideration of the causes, to trace their effects in the artless essays of the more remote periods. Ossian's poems, if allowed to be authentic, are the only specimen of this species generally known; Homer being, according to the testimony of Aristotle, posterior to a long line of poets, his predecessors, and perhaps his patterns. The decided preference given through every poem, to the nation, the family, and person of the poet, strongly mark the national character, as well as that of the times. Allusions to the inferior arts are so usual, and so simple, as must speak them in their first period of progression; or evince a taste and judgment in the author far beyond the times in which he is supposed to have flourished. He is himself, agreeably to that idea of self-importance, the invariable attendant on savage life, the hero of his own tale. Filial duty, and a regard to the merits of an illustrious warrior, might contribute to give Fingal a conspicuous character in poems, the productions of his son; but no reason can be given why Ossian, the bard of song, should be the hero of it. "The

battle," says Regnor Ladbrog, a prince, pirate, and poet of a succeeding age, "is grateful to me as the smile of a virgin in the bloom of youth, as the kiss of a young widow in a retired apartment." An egotism which moderns must suppose agreeable to the character of those times. The pride of family, a prevailing passion when arts and commerce have not set mankind on a level, was indulged by the poet; who comprised in his profession that of the genealogist. Homer frequently traced the descent of his heroes into remote and fabulous antiquity; probably with a view to gratify such of his patrons as piqued themselves on their pedigree.

The poetry of ruder ages is seldom distinguished for elegance of diction or variety of imagery; yet there are advantages so strongly peculiar to it, as must raise it high in the esteem of all admirers of nature, while yet simple and unsophisticated. The state of the arts, as yet rude and imperfect, renders it impossible to deviate from simplicity. The distinctions of property being as yet faintly delineated, no idea of superiority can obtain, but what arises from personal qualifications; and poetic praise, unprostituted to power and wealth, must be the genuine tribute of gratitude and admiration.

That property was in a very unsettled state in the days of Homer, may be gathered from numberless passages in his writings: among the calamities which awaited an aged father on the death of his only son, the plunder of his possessions is mentioned; and Achilles laments, that life, unlike every other human possession, was not to be obtained by theft. Accordingly, in the epithets which accompany the name of each hero through the Iliad and Odyssey, we see no allusions to the adventitious circumstances of wealth and power, if we except the title of "lord of rich Mycenæ," sometimes, though rarely, bestowed on Agamemnon; while the subtlety of Ulysses, the swiftness of Achilles, the courage and strength of Diomed, are mentioned as often as the names of those heroes occur.

The intermediate step between barbarity and perfection, is, perhaps, the least favourable to the cultivation of poetry; for the necessity of writing with simplicity, is taken away long before its beauty is discovered or attended to. The arts, if we may believe the picture of them as exhibited in the shield of Achilles, had attained this intermediate stage of their progress in the days of Homer; and, accordingly, we find

in the works of that great master, some allusions to the meaner arts, as well as illustrations drawn from them, which, however the antiquary might regard as throwing light on so remote a period, criticism must regret as repugnant to that simplicity and universality which form the essential characteristics of poetry. When Hector tells Paris that he deserved a coat of stone, i. e. to be stoned to death, I cannot help suspecting it to have been a cant word of that time; and am rather disgusted, than satisfied, to find the security which Neptune gives for Mars, was agreeable to the form of procedure in the Athenian courts. Though in this instance a modern, and especially a modern of this country, may be easily prejudiced; the laws here, by the uncouthness of language, and other numberless particularities, wearing an air of ridicule by no means connected with the idea of laws in general. Yet, whatever allowances we admit, in consideration of the distant period which produced this patriarch of poetry and literature, and however we abstract ourselves from the prevailing prejudices of modern manners, we still find ourselves better pleased with those images which, from their simplicity, in so long a period, have un-

dergone the smallest variation. The following lines are perhaps the most pleasing to a modern reader of any of the whole Iliad :

What time, in some sequestered vale,
The weary woodman spreads his sparing meal;
When his tir'd arms refuse the axe to rear,
And claim a respite from the sylvan war;
But not till half the prostrate forest lay
Stretch'd in long ruin, and expos'd to day.
POPE.

And it is a curious consideration, that in a period which has exhausted the variety of wealth and vanity, the simple life of the labourer has not undergone the most trifling alteration. Milton, a strict observer as well as a constant imitator of the ancients, has adopted the same idea in the following lines:

——— What time the labour'd ox
With loosen'd traces from the furrow came,
And the swink'd hedger at his supper sat.

The father of English poetry, like that of the Grecian, lived in a period little favourable to simplicity in poetry; and several meannesses occur throughout his works, which in an age more refined, or more barbarous, he must have avoided. We see among the worthie acts of Duke Theseus,

——— How he took the nobil cite after,
And brent the walls, and tore down roof and rafter.

And, among the horrid images which crowd the temple of Mars,

The child stranglid in the cradil,
The coke scaldid for all his long ladil.

The state of equipoise between horror and laughter, which the mind must here experience, may be ranked among its most unpleasing sensations. The period at which the arts attain to their highest degree of perfection, may be esteemed more favourable to the productions of the muses, than either of the foregoing; the mind is indulged in free retrospect of antiquity, and sometimes in conjectural glimpses of futurity; with such a field open before him, the objects which we must suppose should more immediately attract the attention of the poet, would be the failure or success of his predecessors; and the causes to which either was to be attributed. Pope has fully availed himself of the dear-bought experience of all who went before him; there is perhaps no poet more entirely free from this failing. I shall, however, only cite one instance, in which he may seem to have carried his regard for simplicity so far,

as to shew himself guilty of inaccuracy and inattention:

> The hungry judges now the sentence sign,
> And wretches hang that jurymen may dine.

That judges in England never sign a sentence is well known; and hunger, whatever effect it might have had on the jurymen of ancient days, with those of modern times seems to operate rather as an incitement to mercy. Clifden's proud alcove has not at present, and probably never had, any existence; but the fault, if any there is, seems rather that of the language than the poet: or perhaps, after all, it was mere penury of rhyme, and a distress similar to that which made him in another place hunt his poor dab-chick into a copse where it was never seen but in the Dunciad.

THE MICROCOSM, No. 9, January 29, 1787.

The propriety or impropriety of local allusion in poetry depends altogether upon the taste exhibited in the selection of circumstances; when this has been correct and pure, a strength and vivacity, a verisimilitude unattainable by any other mean, will be the result.

No. CVIII.

Call imperfection what thou fanciest such,
Say, here he gives too little, there too much.
POPE.

THE inhabitants of lower Egypt had in vain waited the distention of the all-prolific Nile: the day appointed for festive gratitude was passed in the murmurs of disappointment; and famine, with its terrific train, appeared; when Ali, the son of Hassan, quitted Garam, his native place, in hope of finding at Cairo the means of subsisting life. The intense heat of the sun, which now poured its fervid rays on his defenceless head, at once stimulated and relaxed him; but despair animating him, he braved the torrid sand and vertical ray, and bade adieu to those fields, which, instead of salubrious nutriment, now produced only blinding dust. His eyes had but once looked in vain for his dwelling, when he fell prostrate on the inhospitable waste, and became vigourless and despondent.

"O how unequally! how partially! how injudiciously! (said Ali) are the goods of fortune distributed. At once she is lavish and penurious; for she abounds where her blessings are not

welcomed, and she withholds where gratitude stands ready to receive her. If she must be thus capricious, ah! why did not nature, in forming us, ordain our wills to suit the mutable laws of this despotic tyrant? Why did she endue us with reason, if we are to submit to a government unreasonable and arbitrary?—And why, ah why, did I accept the bounty of the genius who tempted me with offered wisdom, since it aggravates my misery by presenting future calamity to my view? Had my mind been without penetration, blind hope might have cheered me. Let wisdom and indigence never again meet—let those who must be poor, have no tormenting ideas of happiness they can never reach—let them, at least, enjoy the sullen pleasure of knowing nothing less wretched than themselves—or, henceforth, let silence be blessed with riches, and the halo of affluence lend its benign medium to disseminate the rays of wisdom. Then shall I no more be doomed to waste days and years in providing for corporal want—days and years which I may then at ease employ in visiting the cemeteries of heroes, descrying new constellations, or in fathoming the depths of creation."

Ali's imagination now suspended his powers of recollection, till, endeavouring to raise him-

self from the ground, he cast his eyes on the small wallet, which contained, at once, the provision for his journey and the whole of his patrimony. The presence of real evil, and the terror of its inevitable increase, overpowered him: he again sunk on the ground, and remained in silent grief, till the sound of camels approaching roused him. He looked, and saw their master Segued, the heir of wealth, who gave directions to his attendants to halt, and then inquired of Ali, why he found him thus supine and melancholy.

Segued was the most opulent merchant of Garam: his father had bequeathed to him riches that almost defied enumeration; but he had left the young man's mind as nature formed it: he was good, he was generous, he was pious; but he was ignorant, he was conscious of it, and he was unhappy. He was now journeying to grand Cairo, in order to traffic with the merchants arrived from Bulac: he soon learned from Ali the cause of his sorrow, and, having cheered him with refreshment, he sat down to console him.

"Though poverty is thy lot (said he to Ali), yet thou art happy—thy mind is rich; thou art regarded as a sage: the old hear thee with approbation, the young with astonishment: the secrets

of nature have been revealed to thee;—the heavens shew not a light thou canst not name; —the earth bears not a plant of whose properties thou art ignorant, nor does the deep abyss or gloomy cavern contain aught thou art a stranger to:— thou hast discovered why our Nile inundates our fields, and—"

"And what does this avail (interrupted Ali), if I cannot make it inundate our fields?—Ah! how gladly would I exchange all my wisdom to be the possessor of half thy wealth!—I have learned that he must be miserable whose fate is uncertain, and that no knowledge, no science, no wisdom, will counterpoise the anguish of doubting if the morrow will bring the means to endure it.—That I know why the sun's heat is, at this season, most intolerable, will not mitigate his fervour, nor repel his beams. I am as wretched as the most ignorant, and still more wretched because I can contemplate my misery."

"But surely (said Segued), if wisdom does not lessen evil, it strengthens thee to bear it, and it enhances pleasure."

"Not so (Ali rejoined); thy sherbet would have relieved my thirst as agreeably, even if I had not known of what form are the component particles of the ingredients. Science aggravates suffering, by presenting to us all our misfortunes in detail!"

"Let Ali's countenance not frown on me (said Segued), if I own myself unconvinced by his words.—I still, O thou happy man!—happy in ever carrying about with thee a mind stored with delight! I still envy thee, and, could half of my treasures purchase thy wisdom, O how freely would I resign it! I am rich; I can smile at the caprices of our river, and I have the happiness of blessing many; but a mind like mine disgraces power, and I am excluded from the society of those I reverence by the want of knowledge.—Give me thy wisdom, and I would bear thy poverty."

"My wisdom (said Ali) is not mine to give; nor could I by study or tuition have obtained it. Of him who communicated it, I will ask a like portion for thee; but then thou must prepare thine eyes to see objects, perhaps of terror, certainly awful—canst thou stand in the presence of a supernatural being?—Canst thou endure the sight of a terrific genius?"

"My heart never yet knew fear (replied Segued), nor can I receive so desirable a gift by any unacceptable means."

"Near us (said Ali), is a valley whither we must retire to invoke the genius;—let thine attendants wait here, and do thou, if thou wouldst be wise, follow my steps."

Segued obeyed; and they soon reached the bottom of a steep declivity. Ali then, scraping away the sand, discovered a door which, having touched with a talisman he held in his hand, he opened, and they descended some rugged steps together: the door closed on them, and Segued found himself in a large chamber, lighted by millions of lamps: his conductor went to a table at the upper end, took from it spices and frankincense, and, having made a small pile, consumed them in the middle of the floor. The smoke ascended—a noise, as of the loudest thunder, rolled above; horrid screams were heard; and the genius, clothed in ineffable brightness, stood before them. Segued covered his eyes with his hands, unable to support the dazzling lustre, while Ali requested for his friend the same emanations as he had received.

THE PHAROS, No. 11, Dec. 12, 1786.

No. CIX.

Who finds not Providence all good and wise,
Alike in what it gives and what denies?

POPE.

"ALI (replied the sage), I gave thee wisdom to sustain thee in thy necessary toil for subsistence. I have heard thy murmurs, and have found that my power has been controlled by that of my counteracting enemy, who inspires discontent wherever I bestow my blessings. I will not punish thee by withdrawing my gift, valueless as thou now deemest it; for I did not give thee fortitude with wisdom. That thou mayest learn the wisdom of submission, I will grant not only thy request, but thy wishes. Let Segued and Ali possess equal knowledge and equal wealth."

The gratitude of Ali, and the delight of Segued, held them in silent admiration; while the sage, with a countenance softened by pity, continued—"Wretched, short-sighted mortals! Ye ought to fear praying for particular gifts, for ye know not how much more than ye ask will be given you; but that ye may enjoy your wish, and confess my benevolence as great as my

power, I will intercede with my superior genius to suffer none but natural evil to molest you: and as a reward, Ali, for thy early belief on me, and thy pursuance of my counsels, that personal evil may not too heavily oppress thee, nor sorrow for that thou hast brought on thy friend afflict thee, I permit thee, at the end of a year, to visit this mansion, and will then either confirm my gifts to you, or place you again in the situations from which your wishes removed you."—At these words he stamped on the ground; the smoke again ascended, the thunder rolled, the screams filled the air, and the genius vanished. Segued and Ali prostrated themselves on the place he had occupied, and returned to the camels, not doubting that the purpose of their next visit would be, to request a confirmation of their happiness.

They now pursued their journey together, discoursing on the new endowments they had received. As the sage had prescribed no means of attaining the promised end, they agreed to dwell together; that Segued should lend Ali a thousand sequins to trade with, and that Ali should shorten Segued's path to knowledge, by revealing his experience. Hope now braced them; the sun's fervor seemed to have abated;

the sands were less desiccated, and they reached Cairo with unfelt fatigue.

Ali's wealth soon increased to the extent of Segued's possessions, and Segued's progress in science was equalled only by Ali's wisdom. They resolved to return no more to their paternal dwelling, where knowledge would be buried in obscurity, and riches want objects for their employment; but to remain in the metropolis of Egypt, where wealth was respected, and learning courted.

The singularity of his situation was soon felt by Ali. Through Segued's recommendation he was a welcome guest in the houses of the opulent, but here was little to engage his mind; trade and money were the subjects of their contemplation, and these soon disgusted him: the wise were become shy of visiting him; they were dazzled by his riches and splendid manner of life; and free communication was restrained by inequality: he was obliged to neglect his former pleasures for accounts; he had now no quiet leisure, and he found no enjoyment.

In Segued the gift of the genius produced immediate rapture; he conceived himself raised to a superior rank of being; the mist of ignorance vanished before him; but with them, likewise, departed the former companions of his pleasure.

Segued was now too wise to be easily gratified; he discovered faults he had hitherto been blind to; and though the goodness of his nature restrained him from assuming superiority, his inferiors tacitly acknowledged it, and withdrew from competition. The pleasures he had formerly delighted in, charmed no more; he was too wise to enjoy any thing trifling: he always retired to his home gloomy and discontented, and did not find his own abundance a compensation for the deficiency of others.

The chagrin of Ali and of Segued received some alleviation from the joy occasioned throughout Egypt by the influx of the Nile. In the public felicity, private uneasiness was forgotten; but, when this temporary hilarity abated, each began afresh to repine: "I was deceived (said Segued to Ali), in supposing great intellectual possession essential to happiness, or that from the late attainment of it, I should derive those pleasures which proceed from early initiation and habituated pursuit. I had beaten out a track for myself in the road of life which it is uneasy to me to quit, and I find nothing that can atone for the pain I suffer in conflicting with settled habit. As I am wise for no particular purpose, my endeavours want an ob-

ject: I do not see the immediate effect of my labour as I used to do in concerns of merchandise, and I feel myelf in a situation I was not designed for. Tell me, Ali, how far thou thinkest thyself a gainer by this last act of supernatural donation."

"I confess (replied Ali) that riches have no charms for me; all they purchase is insipid. Instead of affording me the leisure and tranquillity I expected, they keep me in continual employment. I reproach myself incessantly for my want of fortitude: I might surely have waited the next season, since it has now blessed our fields with fecundity; and had not despondency made me inactive, I could have procured what was necessary to my existing during this short period of hardship. From all I have seen in my new state of affluence, I learn that the misfortune I wished alleviated was not that of poverty, which obliged me to labour, and sweetened my hours of retirement; the evil that oppressed me was the dread of want; and now that the Nile has risen to its most desired height, were I restored to my former state, I would not wish to change it."

"Let us then (said Segued) wait till the expiration of the year: do thou return to thy scientific retirement, and I will seek the com-

panions of my youth; happy in being freed from that wearisome discernment which points out the failings of those I must converse with; and contented to wear, over these eyes of knowledge, such a veil as shall hinder my seeing deformity in objects, on my idea of whose beauty my happiness depends."

Immediately as the appointed time elapsed, they quitted Cairo, returned to the sage, and besought him to replace them in their original state. "Go, my sons (said he); I will indulge you in your request, on condition ye bear in mind this truth—that man can here look for little happiness beyond the absence of misery—farther felicity is reserved for the celestial mansions.—Depart to your dwellings and occupations, and be convinced, that while thou, Ali, hast the necessaries of life, and thou, Segued, the pleasures of wealth, ye are happier under the dispensation of Providence, than human or supernatural power can make you."

THE PHAROS, No. 12, Dec. 16, 1786.

No. CX.

Ut silicis venis abstrusum excuderet ignem.

VIRGIL.

And struck the imprison'd spark from veins of stone.

MANKIND in general, when they contemplate the records of those illustrious for patriotism, philosophy, poetry, or any other qualities which entitle them to immortality, are inclined to complain of the dearth of abilities and paucity of true genius observable in all ages. Genius, exclaims the discontented complainant, is given but with a sparing hand; instead of moving in a regular orbit as the planet, its course is lawless as the comet's; instead of diffusing the permanent rays of the sun, it glitters only with the dazzling glare of the lightning; it is quick and transitory, and, like the phœnix, appears not once in a century. Such is the usual outcry of those, who love to turn good into evil; to depreciate the dignity of man, and undervalue the works of their Creator. The arguments by which they support this hypothesis are plausible: they observe, that illustrious men have generally flourished, not in a continued se-

ries, when the loss of one was supplied by a successor equally capable, but in a collective body. After their demise, nature, as exhausted by such an unusual effort, has sunk into a lethargy, and slept for ages. These sons of fame, like the brighter constellations of the heavens, obscure by their superior splendour the infinite hosts of stars which are scattered through the regions of endless space. To establish this position, they instance the noted reigns of Augustus, Charles, Anne, and Louis. The respectable names of Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Tibullus, Propertius, Livy, and the other glories of this learned age, are produced: Milton, Dryden, Tillotson, and Clarendon, with Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, Bolingbroke, Addison, Corneille, Racine, and Moliere, seem to corroborate this assertion; but let us examine with impartiality, and the deception will be detected. Can we suppose, that Nature has scattered her blessings with more profusion to one age than another; or that like an unfeeling step-mother, she has robbed one child of its portion to enrich the other? Rather, has not the universality of her influence been equally extended to all? Whence then, it is required, whence originates that inequality of genius and learning, which is so incontrovertibly conspicuous in the annals of

history? The answer is brief:—from the difference of cultivation: the most fertile fields will, if neglected, be over-run with weeds, and the bramble will choke the luxuriance of the floweret. How many neglected spots are concealed in the wilds of Africa? how many tracts, seemingly oppressed with the curse of sterility, have, by the assistance of art, teemed with the fruits of cultivation. The human mind is that luxuriant field; rich in the gifts of nature, but requiring the fostering care of education, to raise the imperfect seed to the maturity of the full-grown crop.

I will venture to affirm, that neither the dark ages of the latter Roman empire, nor the darker ones which succeeded (the period when human nature was at its lowest ebb, and had relapsed into the barbarism from which the superior wisdom of the first race of man had raised it), were deficient in genius, if opportunity had called forth its powers. Statius and Claudian undoubtedly possessed the fire so requisite to form the poet; and the excellent Boethius, martyred by the cruel policy of the imperial court, was born to grace a more splendid æra. To descend still deeper into this region of darkness, even so late as the closing years of the Greek empire, the princess Anna Comnena, to

the eminence of her illustrious birth, joined the milder glories of arts and literature. Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and the other schoolmen, shew an acuteness of reason, and comprehension of mind, employed indeed on subtle niceties and frivolous distinctions, but which, under the direction of a better taste, might have explored the profoundest depths of true philosophy. The Rosicrucians, with other chemical projectors, in the course of an extravagant search after an imaginary menstruum, stumbled on many useful discoveries in that curious science. Pope Silvester, with his illustrious follower, Friar Bacon, who were, for their extraordinary knowledge, deemed magicians by the ignorant multitude, and who were both, for the honour of our nation, Englishmen, directing their studies to the proper ends of philosophy, were the harbingers of that glorious light which has since blazed out. Charlemagne and Alfred are characters which might dignify the annals of any historian, as warriors and legislators; the first softened the rigours of the feudal system, so peculiarly adapted to bind mankind in indissoluble chains; the other blessed his native land with liberty, and laid the first foundations of that constitution, which has since proved the

envy and admiration of Europe. These few illustrious names, which are the sole ornaments of so many ages, only feebly enlightened, were not able to dispel the surrounding clouds; their rays, scattered through such an extensive space, only served to make

Darkness visible.

And when the poet exclaimed

Sint Mecænates, non deerunt, Flacce, Marones,

Let Sheffield smile, and Dryden still shall write,

he asserted that, to which experience has since given the sanction of truth.

It is not to be doubted, but that many a man, whose powers of mind might have carried him to the highest pitch of human glory, has languished in obscurity for want of those opportunities, or that patronage, which calls forth the powers of the soul. Those few to whom their better fortune has granted this envied lot, sufficiently prove this position; and many of the most excellent of the latter Roman Emperors, left the more humble roofs of their native cottages, for the splendid magnificence of the imperial palace.

But the land of liberty is the soil favourable to the rearing these latent seeds; and it has been observed, that though genius may flourish awhile under the exotic warmth of arbitrary power, its blossom is but perishable: it languishes under the nipping blasts of oppression; and pines for the more congenial sun of freedom. The iron sway of slavery crushes the soul as well as the body:

> Animum quoque prægravat una,
> Atque affigit humo divinæ particulam auræ.
>
> Weighs down the portion of celestial birth,
> The breath of God, and fixes it to earth.—
> FRANCIS.

That I may not seem to assert an improbability, let us examine the different states of literature in the commonwealths of Greece and Rome, under the dominion of the Cæsars. An objection is now easily started, viz. that the Augustan age is the great æra of Roman literature; and that under the commonwealth the advances towards the politer arts were slow and difficult. The fact is, that the Romans, during the first centuries, were too deeply engaged in their foreign and domestic wars, to attend to the milder occupations of peace. Self-preservation naturally engages the attention of men, prior to

all other considerations; when that is secured, he has leisure to look around him, and make his first attempts in the sciences. In the earlier, rude, and martial times, the trumpet drowned the notes of the lyre; in those times, therefore, the genius most suitable to the age shone with distinguished lustre; this was the age of patriotism and conquest, and military merit was the only certain road to the dignities of the republic. When Rome was subjected to Cæsar, her empire extended over the then known world. The Grecian elegance had softened her rougher genius; and science had polished the ferocity of her manners. The laurel of conquest faded before the olive of peace; and literary merit became the object of attention. Augustus only established that of which others had laid the foundations; Ennius, Terence, Lucretius, Catullus, and Sallust, were prior to him; and the Roman eloquence, which was born and which died with Cicero, sunk under the malignity of his influence. It is worth remarking, that though the Augustan age produced the best poets, yet eloquence fled with freedom: after the death of Cicero, she degenerated from her purer strains into the laboured phrases of affected declamation. Poetry, which is so noted for its suppleness, flourished only for a few years,

and probably owed its temporary vigour to the mean prostitution of its talents, in flattering the enslaver of his country, and the tyrant of the world.

Greece, on the contrary, produced a continued series of great and learned men; she was not, like Rome, forced to struggle for her liberty and existence against the jealousy of surrounding states. After the decisive battles of Marathon, Platæa, and Salamis, her internal dissensions were her only enemies; but even those promoted rather than impeded the powers of her genius. To the Peloponnesian war we owe the history of Thucydides, the funeral orations of Pericles and Plato; and to the treachery of Philip the sublime invectives of Demosthenes; but when the conquering eagle of Rome, under the pretence of protecting, enslaved the country, from that moment her genius withered; and the only writers she afterwards produced, Polybius in particular, instead of recording the glories of their native country, celebrated the exploits of Rome. Rome therefore, now the uncontrolled mistress of the world, was expected to excel in arts as well as arms; under Augustus, as before observed, she flourished for a time; but under the succeeding emperors she relapsed into ignorance, though she possessed not the

virtues of the consular state. The feeble efforts which learning afterwards made to recover her ancient preeminence, seem to confirm the position, that under liberty alone she can acquire a permanent strength.

Under the happy reigns of Vespasian, Trajan, and the better emperors, the short-lived ray of returning freedom awaked her from her lethargy; and Juvenal, the Plinies, and Tacitus, are enrolled in the last list of Roman worthies.—The works of the two Plinies might have been produced under any reign, however tyrannical. The studies of the naturalist could never awaken the jealousy of the most capricious tyrant, and the panegyric of the younger Pliny was a piece of complimentary flattery, which must be acceptable to the ears of any prince. Of his letters it has been truly observed, that they are only elegant trifles. In Cicero's collection we find a history of the times, the characters of the greatest men delineated with spirit, and his sentiments are delivered with a Roman freedom; Pliny was overawed by the terrors of despotism, and dared not to venture on topics which might rouse the anger of his sovereign: but that Juvenal and Tacitus adorned this period, must incontestably be the effect of at least some degree of liberty; otherwise the unsparing lash of the sa-

tirist would not have attacked the most powerful men of Rome; or the bold pen of the historian dared to display the actions of the former emperors, with such freedom of censure, so odiously and yet so justly: he would have been contented with a bare relation, and left the reader to make those observations, which, though he could not but have felt, he would have been afraid to give vent to; especially when Juvenal, in the reign of Domitian, had been banished for a slight reflection on an insignificant actor.

As, in the course of this paper, many of the great names of antiquity have been mentioned, I cannot help noticing the assertion of a very learned man, in which his partiality for the ancients seems to have hurried him on beyond due lengths. I refer the reader to the 127th paper, 4th vol. of the Adventurer, from whence the following is extracted, "The age will never again return, when a Pericles, after walking with Plato in a portico built by Phidias, and painted by Apelles, might repair to hear a pleading of Demosthenes, or a tragedy of Sophocles."

Unless this passage is more accurately considered, it seems to give the decisive turn against the moderns; and presents a formidable list of great names to which we have but few to oppose. But if we examine the chronological or-

der, we shall find, that Pericles, Phidias, and Sophocles, were hardly cotemporaries; Pericles dying in the 87th Olympiad; but Demosthenes, who was cotemporary with Apelles, did not pronounce his first Philippic till the 107th, and Plato died in the 108th. The reader who would wish to know the more particular dates, I refer to Tallent's chronology, who has regulated his by Scaliger's tables. From this it will appear, that though a Pericles might have walked in a portico built by Phidias, it could not have been painted by Apelles; and though he might have heard a tragedy of Sophocles, he could not have conversed with Plato, or repaired to a pleading of Demosthenes. I might with equal justice say, the time will never return, when an Alfred, after walking with Bacon in a portico built by Wren, and painted by West, might repair to hear a speech of Chatham's, or a tragedy of Shakespeare's. Surely this is an unfair mode of comparison, and, to take a hint from his own motto,

Si veteres ita miratur laudatque,
Ut nihil anteferat, nihil illis comparet, errat.

But oft they labour under great mistakes;
As when their ancients lavishly they raise,
Above all modern rivalship and praise.—

FRANCIS.

But to return to my subject. From the variety of concurring accidents and combinations of circumstances, which are so necessary, if not to form, at least to force genius into notice, it is more to be wondered at, that so many great characters have, than that more have not existed. True it is, that there are some, who are by nature endowed with such powers of mind, that they have risen superior to all surrounding impediments; but the numbers of these transcendant men are comparatively few, with those who have rendered themselves eminent from the fortuitous concurrence of lucky circumstances. To any one who attentively considers the variety of character which may be met with in a large public school, the following will appear no unimportant circumstance. He cannot but observe the great number of boys, who, by their natural abilities and early attainments, seem to promise future greatness; and who, provided they had all an equal chance of succeeding in the world, might attain the heights of excellence. Yet how few of them, in their maturer years, fulfil those expectations which the earliest period of their life so justly excited.—The reason is evident: when at school they had full and fair scope for the exercise of their talents; they were fired with emulation, animated by the

hope of glory. Envy had not as yet tainted the purity of the breast; and every one honestly confessed his admiration of their superior powers. When they enter the larger theatre of the world, the case is widely different: the passions then take a larger range; envy and all the blacker ones expand themselves. One man hides himself in the obscurity of what mistaken philosophy calls a life of retirement and ease, that is, of indolence and sloth; another destroys himself in the excesses of licentious pleasure; here distressed merit pines in obscurity; there the bent of the soul is mistaken, and the injudicious and arbitrary will of a parent, or a guardian, forces it into that line, where its lustre is darkened and its powers fail. For the human mind, in spite of the pride of wisdom, and vanity of self complacency, is confined to a narrow sphere: though some men, by the universality of their attainments, and versatility of their powers, seem to contradict this assertion, yet those instances are so rare, as scarce to form an exception to the general rule. Newton is great as an astronomer, and Chatham as a statesman: when confined to their own proper paths, their abilities are wonderful, their glory consequently great; but place a Chatham at the astronomical calculation of a Newton, or a Newton at the helm

of state, their respective worth is immediately lost, and they both would sink to the level of common mortals. Genius then, if not totally buried, is often perverted, and its powers rendered ineffectual. Pope observed of a certain illustrious character, "How sweet an Ovid in a Murray lost;" and it is not to be doubted, but that the abilities of many have been equally distorted from their natural bent.

I am inclined to think, that the maxim—

That as the twig is bent the tree's inclin'd,

is not universally, though generally, true. Rather, like a tree forced from its natural situation, it will, when left to the exercise of its own powers, recoil with the greater violence. We may remember that Addison was made a secretary of state, and Swift, if he had listened to king William, would have been a cornet of horse.—How little the talents of the one were adapted to his office is well known; what a figure the author of the Tale of the Tub would have made as a cornet, I leave to my readers to judge: the Attic elegance and polished wit of Addison was lost amidst the turbulence of state intrigues; and the keen sarcastic genius of Swift was by no means fitted for the camp; unless it can be

proved, that humour can gain a battle, or satire take a town.

THE MICROCOSM, No. 10, Feb. 5, 1787.

It has been customary with most writers, to consider the dark ages as altogether divested of literary merit, but I agree with the author of the present paper in considering this as a mistake; for the Christian world may, from the time of Charlemagne and Alfred to the year 1100, boast of a succession of authors, who, if they contributed little to dispel the universal lethargy, rescue, at least, their centuries from the imputation of total ignorance. During a part of the ninth century Joannes Erigena, generally esteemed a native of Scotland, and a man of considerable learning, studied at the court of Alfred, and composed a work in five books on the Division of Nature, printed about a century ago at Oxford. But what more especially throws a lustre round this venerable author, is an anecdote recorded by Bale, who asserts that Alfred, immediately after founding the university of Oxford, created Erigena professor there. He appears to have been endowed with much liberality of mind, and to have lost his life by the bigotry of his age; for, on publishing some censures on the church, during the time he resided at Paris, he was driven from that city by order of the Pope, and returning to England in 883, was murdered by the monks of Malmesbury, who, in revenge for the severity of his strictures, cruelly stabbed him with their penknives. Soon after the death of Charlemagne, Æginhard, his secretary and son-in-law, whose name hath been celebrated to posterity by the ardent affection which Imma, the daughter of the emperor, had conceived for him, and who, to prevent his being tracked from her apartments, carried him on her shoulders through the snow; having lost his beloved wife, and, with her, all relish for society, fled into retirement, and there finished his Life of Charlemagne and his Annals, which, together with his letters, have gone through two or three editions, and are written, considering the period at

which they were composed, with much chastity and elegance of style. Another writer, no less famed for learning and taste, the rival and cotemporary of Æginhard, was our celebrated countryman Alcain, who had the merit of introducing polite literature into France, and whose erudition and industry are said to have been so great that he left fifty treatises behind him, written on important subjects. In the year 886, Paris was attacked by the Normans and the Danes; and Abbo, a monk of that city, wrote a poem in Latin hexameters, descriptive of the siege; which, though possessing little poetic beauty, is a proof that those sparks of literature which Charlemagne had cherished were still kept alive, and occasionally burst forth to illume our benighted hemisphere. Early, indeed, in the ninth century the classical history and mythology of Greece and Rome seem to have been well known; for it is on record that Witlasius, a king of the West-Saxons, A. D. 833, granted, in his charter to the church of Croyland abbey, his robe of tissue, on which was embroidered the destruction of Troy; a remarkable instance of the early popularity of that celebrated event. The tenth century receives considerable lustre from the respectable name of Suidas, whose very learned and correct Lexicon, a phenomenon of literary genius for the times, is still, and deservedly, in high repute among the literati. About the year 1076, Guido, bishop of Anicus, wrote an epic poem on the exploits of William the Conqueror, and is said to have imitated, and with some success, the style both of Virgil and Statius; and towards the close of this and beginning of the twelfth century, flourished the ingenious but unfortunate Abelard, whose progress in letters was the admiration and envy of his contemporaries, and finally the cause of his sufferings and disgrace. So great, indeed, were his abilities, that Andrew du Cheyne asserts that pupils crowded to his lectures from every quarter of the Latin world. Not less learned, and still more extraordinary and interesting, is the character of the beautiful Heloisa, a lady whose accomplishments were a prodigy in her own age, and whose distresses will draw tears from every future one.

I have thus briefly noticed these authors, to show, in corroboration of the remarks given in this paper from the Microcosm, that there has been no century, from the time of Charlemagne to the year 1100, without its literary luminary: that learning was still kept alive, and, though neither rendered attractive by inventive genius or profound inquiry, served as a basis for those wild and airy structures which the spirit of chivalry and romance subsequently erected, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and which attained so much perfection in the fourteenth.

No. CXI.

> Res gestæ regumque, ducumque, et tristia bella,
> Quo scribi possint numero, monstravit Homerus.
>
> HORAT.

> By Homer taught, the modern poet sings,
> In epic strains, of heroes, wars, and kings.
>
> FRANCIS.

THERE are certain forms and etiquettes in life, which, though the neglect of them does not amount to the commission of a crime, or the violation of a duty, are yet so established by example, and sanctioned by custom, as to pass into statutes, equally acknowledged by society, and almost equally binding to individuals, with the laws of the land, or the precepts of morality. A man guilty of breaking these, though he cannot be transported for a felon, or indicted for treasonable practices, is yet, in the high court of custom, branded as a flagrant offender against decorum, as notorious for an unprecedented infringement on propriety.

There is no race of men on whom these laws are more severe than authors; and no species of authors more subject to them, than periodical essayists. Homer having prescribed the form,

or, to use a more modern phrase, set the fashion of epic poems, whoever presumes to deviate from this plan, must not hope to participate his dignity: and whatever method the Spectator, the Guardian, and others, who first adopted this species of writing, have pursued in their undertaking, is set down as a rule for the conduct of their followers; which, whoever is bold enough to transgress, is accused of a deviation from the original design, and a breach of established regulation.

It has hitherto been customary for all periodical writers to take some opportunity, in the course of their labours, to display their critical abilities, either by making observations on some popular author and work of known character, or by bringing forth the performances of hidden merit, and throwing light on genius in obscurity. To the critiques of the Spectator, Shakspeare, and, more particularly, Milton, are indebted for no inconsiderable share of the reputation which they now so universally enjoy; and by his means were the ruder graces, and more simple beauties, of Chevy Chace held up to public view, and recommended to general admiration.

I should probably be accused of swerving from the imitation of so great an example, were

not I to take occasion to shew that I too am not entirely destitute of abilities of this kind; but that, by possessing a decent share of critical discernment, and critical jargon, I am capable of becoming a very tolerable commentator. For the truth of which, I shall rather prefer calling the attention of my readers to an object as yet untreated of by any of my immediate predecessors, than venture to throw in my observations on any work which has passed the ordeal of frequent examination. And this I shall do for two reasons; partly, because were I to choose a field, how fertile soever, of which many others had before me been reaping the fruits, mine would be at best but the gleanings of criticism; and, partly, from a more interested view, from a selfish desire of accumulated praise; since, by making a work as yet almost wholly unknown, the subject of my consideration, I shall acquire the reputation of taste, as well as judgement,—of judiciousness in selection as well as justness in observation;—of propriety in choosing the object, as well as skill in using the language of commentary.

The epic poem on which I shall ground my present critique, has, for its chief characteristics, brevity and simplicity. The author,—whose

name I lament that I am, in some degree, prevented from consecrating to immortal fame, by not knowing what it is—the author, I say, has not branched his poem into excrescences of episode, or prolixities of digression; it is neither variegated with diversity of unmeaning similitudes, nor glaring with the varnish of unnatural metaphor. The whole is plain and uniform; so much so indeed, that I should hardly be surprised if some morose readers were to conjecture, that the poet had been thus simple rather from necessity than choice; that he had been restrained not so much by chastity of judgment, as sterility of imagination.

Nay, some there may be, perhaps, who will dispute his claim to the title of an Epic Poet; and will endeavour to degrade him even to the rank of a ballad-monger. But I, as his commentator, will contend for the dignity of my author; and will plainly demonstrate his poem to be an Epic Poem, agreeable to the examples of all poets, and the consent of all critics heretofore.

First, it is universally agreed that an epic poem should have three component parts; a beginning, a middle, and an end; secondly, it is allowed, that it should have one grand action, or main design, to the forwarding of which, all the

parts of it should directly or indirectly tend; and that this design should be in some measure consonant with, and conducive to, the purpose of morality;—and, thirdly, it is indisputably settled, that it should have a hero. I trust that in none of these points the poem before us will be found deficient. There are other inferior properties, which I shall consider in due order.

Not to keep my readers longer in suspense, the subject of the poem is "The Reformation of the Knave of Hearts." It is not improbable, that some may object to me that a "knave" is an unworthy hero for an epic poem; that a hero ought to be all that is great and good. The objection is frivolous. The greatest work of this kind that the world has ever produced, has "The Devil," for its hero; and supported as my author is by so great a precedent, I contend, that his hero is a very decent hero; and, especially, as he has the advantage of Milton's, by reforming at the end, is evidently entitled to a competent share of celebrity.

I shall now proceed to the more immediate examination of the poem in its different parts. The beginning, say the critics, ought to be plain and simple; neither embellished with the flowers

of poetry, nor turgid with pomposity of diction. In this how exactly does our author conform to the established opinion! he begins thus:

> The Queen of Hearts
> She made some tarts—

Can any thing be more clear! more natural! more agreeable to the true spirit of simplicity! Here are no tropes—no figurative expressions,—not even so much as an invocation to the muse. He does not detain his readers by any needless circumlocution; by unnecessarily informing them what he is going to sing; or still more unnecessarily enumerating what he is not going to sing: but, according to the precept of Horace,

> ——— In medias res,
> Non secus ac notas, auditorem rapit;— —

that is, he at once introduces us, and sets us on the most easy and familiar footing imaginable, with her majesty of Hearts, and interests us deeply in her domestic concerns. But to proceed:

> The Queen of Hearts
> She made some tarts,
> All on a summer's day.

Here, indeed, the prospect brightens, and we

are led to expect some liveliness of imagery, some warmth of poetical colouring; but here is no such thing. There is no task more difficult to a poet, than that of rejection. Ovid among the ancients, and Dryden among the moderns, were, perhaps, the most remarkable for the want of it. The latter, from the haste in which he generally produced his compositions, seldom paid much attention to the "limæ labor," "the labour of correction," and seldom, therefore, rejected the assistance of any idea that presented itself. Ovid, not content with catching the leading features of any scene or character, indulged himself in a thousand minutiæ of description, a thousand puerile prettinesses, which were in themselves uninteresting and took off greatly from the effect of the whole; as the numberless suckers and straggling branches of a fruit-tree, if permitted to shoot out unrestrained, while they are themselves barren and useless, diminish considerably the vigour of the parent stock. Ovid had more genius, but less judgment, than Virgil; Dryden more imagination, but less correctness, than Pope: had they not been deficient in these points, the former would certainly have equalled, the latter infinitely outshone, the merits of his countrymen. Our author was undoubtedly possessed of that power which they

wanted; and was cautious not to indulge too far the sallies of a lively imagination. Omitting, therefore, any mention of sultry Sirius, sylvan shade, sequestered glade, verdant hills, purling rills, mossy mountains, gurgling fountains, &c. he simply tells us that it was "All on a summer's day." For my own part, I confess, that I find myself rather flattered than disappointed; and consider the poet as rather paying a compliment to the abilities of his readers, than balking their expectations. It is certainly a great pleasure to see a picture well painted; but it is a much greater to paint it well one's self. This, therefore, I look upon as a stroke of excellent management in the poet. Here, every reader is at liberty to gratify his own taste; to design for himself just what sort of "summer's day" he likes best; to choose his own scenery; dispose his lights and shades as he pleases; to solace himself with a rivulet or a horse-pond,—a shower or a sun-beam,—a grove, or a kitchen-garden, according to his fancy. How much more considerate this, than if the poet had, from an affected accuracy of description, thrown us into an unmannerly perspiration by the heat of the atmosphere; forced us into a landscape of his own planning, with, perhaps, a paltry good-for-nothing zephyr or two,

and a limited quantity of wood and water.— All this Ovid would undoubtedly have done. Nay, to use the expression of a learned brother-commentator, "quovis pignore decertem," "I would lay any wager," that he would have gone so far as to tell us what the tarts were made of; and perhaps wandered into an episode on the art of preserving cherries. But our poet, above such considerations, leaves every reader to choose his own ingredients, and sweeten them to his own liking; wisely foreseeing, no doubt, that the more palatable each had rendered them to his own taste, the more he would be affected at their approaching loss.

All on a summer's day.

I cannot leave this line without remarking, that one of the Scribleri, a descendant of the famous Martinus, has expressed his suspicions of the text being corrupted here, and proposes, instead of "All on," reading "Alone," alleging, in favour of this alteration, the effect of solitude in raising the passions. But Hiccius Doctius, a High-Dutch commentator, one nevertheless well versed in British literature, in a note of his usual length and learning, has confuted the arguments of Scriblerus. In sup-

port of this present reading, he quotes a passage from a poem written about the same period with our author's by the celebrated Johannes Pastor,* entitled " An Elegiac Epistle to the Turnkey of Newgate," wherein the gentleman declares, that, rather indeed in compliance with an old custom than to gratify any particular wish of his own, he is going

——— All hanged for to be
Upon that fatal Tyburn Tree.

Now, as nothing throws greater light on an author than the concurrence of a cotemporary writer, I am inclined to be of Hiccius's opinion, and to consider the " All" as an elegant expletive, or, as he more aptly phrases it " elegans expletivum." The passage therefore must stand thus:—

The Queen of Hearts
She made some tarts,
All on a summer's day.

And thus ends the first part or beginning; which is simple and unembellished; opens the subject in a natural and easy manner; excites,

* More commonly known, I believe, by the appellation of Jack Shepherd.

but does not too far gratify, our curiosity: for a reader of accurate observation may easily discover, that the hero of the poem has not, as yet, made his appearance.

THE MICROCOSM, No. 11, Feb. 12, 1787.

No. CXII.

-Servetur ad imum,
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.
HORAT.

From his first entrance, to the closing scene,
Let him one equal character maintain.
FRANCIS

HAVING thus gone through the first part, or beginning of the poem, we may, naturally enough, proceed to the consideration of the second.

The second part, or middle, is the proper place for bustle and business, for incident and adventure:

The Knave of Hearts
He stole those tarts.

Here attention is awakened; and our whole souls are intent upon the first appearance of the hero. Some readers may perhaps be offended at his making his entré in so disadvantageous a character as that of a thief. To this I plead precedent.

The hero of the Iliad, as I observed in a former paper, is made to lament very patheti-

cally,—that "life is not, like all other possessions, to be acquired by theft."—A reflection, in my opinion, evidently shewing, that, if he did refrain from this ingenious art, it was not from want of an inclination that way. We may remember too, that in Virgil's poem, almost the first light in which the pious Æneas appears to us, is a deer-stealer; nor is it much excuse for him, that the deer were wandering without keepers; for however he might, from this circumstance, have been unable to ascertain whose property they were, he might, I think, have been pretty well assured that they were not his.

Having thus acquitted our hero of misconduct, by the example of his betters, I proceed to what I think the master-stroke of the poet.

The Knave of Hearts
He stole those tarts,
And—took them—quite away!!

Here, whoever has an ear for harmony, and a heart for feeling, must be touched! There is a desponding melancholy in the run of the last line! an air of tender regret in the addition of, "quite away!" a something so expressive of irrecoverable loss! so forcibly intimating the "Ah nunquam reditura!" "They never can return!" In short, such a union of sound and sense,

as we rarely, if ever, meet with in any author, ancient or modern. Our feelings are all alive; but the poet, wisely dreading that our sympathy with the injured queen might alienate our affections from his hero, contrives immediately to awaken our fears for him, by telling us, that

The King of Hearts
Call'd for those tarts—

We are all conscious of the fault of our hero, and all tremble, with him, for the punishment which the enraged monarch may inflict:

And beat the Knave—full sore!

The fatal blow is struck! We cannot but rejoice that guilt is justly punished, though we sympathize with the guilty object of punishment. Here Scriblerus, who, by the by, is very fond of making unnecessary alterations, proposes reading "score" instead of "sore;" meaning thereby to particularize, that the beating bestowed by this monarch consisted of twenty stripes. But this proceeds from his ignorance of the genius of our language, which does not admit of such an expression as "full score," but would require the insertion of the particle "a," which cannot be, on account of the metre.

And this is another great artifice of the poet: by leaving the quantity of beating indeterminate, he gives every reader the liberty to administer it, in exact proportion to the sum of indignation which he may have conceived against his hero; that, by thus amply satisfying their resentment, they may be the more easily reconciled to him afterwards.

> The King of Hearts
> Call'd for those tarts,
> And beat the Knave full sore!

Here ends the second part, or middle of the poem, in which we see the character and exploits of the hero pourtrayed with the hand of a master.

Nothing now remains to be examined, but the third part, or end. In the end, it is a rule pretty well established, that the work should draw towards a conclusion, which our author manages thus:

> The Knave of Hearts
> Brought back those tarts.

Here every thing is at length settled; the theft is compensated; the tarts restored to their right owner; and poetical justice, in every respect, strictly and impartially administered.

We may observe, that there is nothing in

which our poet has better succeeded, than in keeping up an unremitted attention in his readers to the main instruments, the machinery of his poem, viz. the tarts; insomuch, that the aforementioned Scriblerus has sagely observed, that "he cannot tell, that he does not know, but the tarts may be reckoned the heroes of the poem." Scriblerus, though a man of learning, and frequently right in his opinion, has here certainly hazarded a rash conjecture: his arguments are overthrown entirely by his great opponent, Hiccius, who concludes, by triumphantly asking, "Had the tarts been eaten, how could the poet have compensated for the loss of his heroes?"

We are now come to the denouement, the setting all to rights; and our poet, in the management of his moral, is certainly superior to his great ancient predecessors. The moral of their fables, if any they have, is so interwoven with the main body of the work, that in endeavouring to unravel it, we should tear the whole. Our author has very properly preserved his, whole and entire, for the end of his poem, where he completes his main design, the reformation of his hero, thus:

And vow'd he'd steal no more.

Having, in the course of his work, shewn the bad effects arising from theft, he evidently means this last moral reflection, to operate with his readers as a gentle and polite dissuasive from stealing:

The Knave of Hearts
Brought back those tarts,
And vow'd he'd steal no more!

Thus have I industriously gone through the several parts of this wonderful work; and clearly proved it, in every one of these parts, and in all of them together, to be a due and proper epic poem; and to have as good a right to that title, from its adherence to prescribed rules, as any of the celebrated master-pieces of antiquity. And here I cannot help again lamenting, that by not knowing the name of the author, I am unable to twine our laurels together; and to transmit to posterity the mingled praises of genius and judgment, of the poet and his commentator.

Having some space left in this paper, I will now, with the permission of my readers of the great world, address myself more particularly to my fellow-citizens.

To them, the essay which I have here presented, will, I flatter myself, be peculiarly

serviceable at this time; and I would earnestly recommend an attentive perusal of it to all of them whose muses are engaged in compositions of the epic kind.—I am very much afraid that I may run into the error, which I have myself pointed out, of becoming too local,—but where it is evidently intended for the good of my fellow-citizens, it may, I hope, be now and then pardonable. At the present juncture, as many have applied for my assistance, I cannot find in my heart to refuse it them. Were I to attempt fully explaining, why, at the present juncture, I fear it would be vain. Would it not seem incredible to the ladies, were I to tell them, that the period approaches, when upwards of a hundred epic poems will be exposed to the public view, most of them nearly of equal length and many of them nearly of equal merit, with the one which I have here taken into consideration; illustrated moreover with elegant etchings, designed either as hieroglyphical explanations of the subject, or as practical puns on the name of the author?—And yet, in truth, so it is,—and on this subject I wish to give a word of advice to my countrymen.

Many of them have applied to me by letter, to assist them with designs for prefixing to their poems; and this I should very willingly have

done, had those gentlemen been kind enough to subscribe their real names to their requests: whereas, all that I have received have been signed Tom Long, Philosophus, Philalethes, and such like. I have therefore been prevented from affording them the assistance I wished; and cannot help wondering, that the gentlemen did not consider, that it was impossible for me to provide typical references for feigned names; as, for ought I know, the person who signs himself Tom Long may not be four feet high; Philosophus may be possessed of a considerable share of folly; and Philalethes may be as arrant a liar as any in the kingdom.

It may not however be useless to offer some general reflections for all who may require them. It is not improbable, that, as the subject of their poems is the Restoration, many of my fellow-citizens may choose to adorn their title-pages with the representation of his majesty, Charles the Second, escaping the vigilance of his pursuers in the Royal Oak. There are some particularities generally observable in this picture, which I shall point out to them, lest they fall into similar errors. Though I am as far as any other Briton can be from wishing to "curtail" his majesty's wig "of its fair proportion," yet I have sometimes been apt to think it rather im-

proper, to make the wig, as is usually done, of larger dimensions than the tree in which it and his majesty are concealed. It is a rule in logic, and, I believe, may hold good in most other sciences, that "omne majus continet in se minus," that, "every thing larger can hold any thing that is less," but I own, I never heard the contrary advanced or defended with any plausible arguments, viz. "that every little thing can hold one larger." I therefore humbly propose, that there should at least be an edge of foliage round the outskirts of the said wig; and that its curls should not exceed in number the leaves of the tree. There is also another practice almost equally prevalent, of which I am sceptic enough to doubt the propriety. I own I cannot think it conducive to the more effectual concealment of his majesty, that there should be three regal crowns stuck on three different branches of the tree.

Horace says indeed,

——— Pictoribus atque poetis
Quidlibet audendi semper fuit æqua potestas.

Painters and Poets our indulgence claim,
Their daring equal, and their art the same.
FRANCIS.

And this may be reckoned a very allowable

poetical licence; in as much as it lets the spectator into the secret, "who is in the tree." But it is apt to make him at the same time throw the accusation of negligence and want of penetration on the three dragoons, who are usually depicted on the fore ground, cantering along very composedly with serene countenances, erect persons, and drawn swords very little longer than themselves.

THE MICROCOSM, No. 12.

No. CXIII.

——— ——— ——— Usus,
Quem penes arbitrium est, et jus, et norma loquendi.
HORAT.

Use is the judge, the law, and rule of speech.

IT is a favourite amusement with me, and one of which, in the present paper, I shall invite my readers to participate, to adopt a maxim established in any single instance, to trace its influence where it has operated undiscovered, to examine the secret springs by which it has worked, and the causes which have contributed to their concealment. In the course of this pursuit, I may boast, that there is scarce one of these miniatures of experience and observation, from the moral maxims of Grecian philosophy, to the prudential apophthegms of Poor Robin, which has not been successively the object of my observation and discussion. I am, however, aware, that in my opinion of their importance, I may perhaps be singular.

That "life is short," that "the generality of mankind are vicious," seem ideas that might have suggested themselves to a mind undistinguished for peculiar sagacity, or an uncommon

share of experience. But to carry farther the former of these maxims, and to consider, that life is short, when compared with the multiplicity of its business and the variety of its pursuits; that it is too much so for the purposes of honour and ambition; that to draw a conclusion from the attempts of men, we should imagine it longer; is an observation not so entirely unworthy of a philosopher; and, by pursuing the latter of these thoughts, though, on the first view, it may not appear the result of any extraordinary observation, it may be found, on a narrower inspection, to convey a strong argument of the impropriety of popular government.

The scrap of Latin which, in conformity to established precedent, is prefixed to my paper, exhibits an example of the influence of fashion beyond those limits which are usually assigned to its prerogative. For, were we to accept the definition of it the most usually accepted, we should consider it only as the director of diversion and dress; of unmeaning compliment, and unsocial intimacy. And, however evidently mistaken such an opinion might appear, we must look for its source in one of the most prevailing principles of the human mind; a principle (the excess of which we stigmatise by the name of pedantry) of deducing the illustrations of every

subject of inquiry from the more immediate objects of our own pursuits, and circumscribing its bounds within the limits of our own observation. On the contrary, we shall find, that all our attempts to prescribe bounds to the activity of this so powerful agent will end only in surprise at the extent of its authority; in astonishment at the universality of its influence. Its claim to an undisputed empire over language is asserted by the author from whom I have taken the motto of this paper; with what justice, the testimony of a succeeding age may declare; when a Cæsar who made and unmade the laws of the world at his pleasure, found the smallest innovation in language beyond the utmost limits of arbitrary power. Nothing indeed but the highest vanity, nourished by the grossest adulation, an idea of the infinitude of sovereign authority, and servile obedience, could have given birth to such an attempt.

However paradoxical it may seem, that, in a matter of judgment and taste, the vague arbitration of individuals should be preferable to the absolute decision of a learned body; yet the imbecility so evident in the language of a neighbouring nation, and so undoubtedly the effect of establishing such a court of criticism, leaves us little reason to regret, that language,

with us, is so entirely the child of chance and custom.—The first prize of rhetoric given to a woman, was a bad omen to the future endeavours of the French academy.

To omit the innumerable inconveniences attending on every attempt to regulate language; to judge of the possible success of such an attempt, from the abstracted probability alone, were to declare it impossible. A multitude of circumstances, equally unforeseen and unavoidable, must concur to the formation of a language. An improvement, or corruption, of manners; the reduction of a foreign enemy; or an invasion from abroad, are circumstances that ultimately, or immediately, tend to produce some change in the language of a people. And even of these, the most feeble agents have been found more efficacious, than the joint operations of power and policy.

The conquests of this nation on the continent contributed more, perhaps, to the naturalisation of the French language amongst us, than the Norman invasion, and its attendant consequences, the necessity laid on every individual to acquire the use of that tongue in which all cases of property were to be determined, and the numberless disadvantages and

restrictions imposed on the study of the native language.

At a time when measures so seemingly decisive proved ineffectual, it may be curious to observe the agency of others, apparently foreign from any connection with the improvement or alteration of our language. The residence of our nobility in the conquered provinces of France, the continual wars maintained against that nation, making the study of their language an indispensable qualification in all who aspired to civil or military dignities, unavoidably brought on a change in our own. The accusation, therefore, of a learned etymologist, against Chaucer, of introducing into our language, " integra verborum plaustra," — " whole cartloads of words," however elegant in expression, is false in foundation. The language of Chaucer's poetry is that of the court in which he lived; and that it was not, no probable conclusion can be drawn, from any difference of style in this author's contemporaries. In those who writ under the same advantages, no such difference is observable; and those who were excluded from them, laboured under extreme disadvantages, from the variations of vernacular language, and the diversity of provincial dia-

lect; which, as they have now in a great measure ceased to exist, may, together with their primary causes, furnish a subject for curious inquiry.

It appears from the concurrence of several ingenious antiquaries, as well as from the testimony of Caxton, in one of his prefaces, that the English language was, in his time, diversified by innumerable provincial peculiarities. He mentions his own choice of the Kentish dialect, and the success that attended it. The language of Chaucer's poetry is frequently more intelligible to a modern reader, than that of such of his successers as employed themselves on popular subjects. Gawin Douglas, a poetical translator of Virgil, is now, owing to the use of a northern dialect, though a near contemporary of Spenser's, almost unintelligible.

After establishing the existence of a fact, the beaten track of transition will naturally lead us to a consideration of its causes. Among the first effects produced by an extension of empire, may be reckoned a barbarous peculiarity of language, in the provinces the most remote from the seat of learning and refinement. Livy is said to have had his Patavinity; and Claudian is accused of barbarisms, the consequence of his education in a distant province. A diffi-

culty of conveyance, a stagnation of commercial intercourse, will produce the same effects with too wide extension of empire; and are as effectual a barrier against a mixture of idioms and dialect, as, in a more civilised state, the utmost distance of situation between the most remote provinces.

To causes seemingly so unconnected with the situation of language, must we attribute the barbarity of our own during so many centuries; and those which contributed to its refinement, may, at first sight, probably, seem equally foreign to that effect. No nation, perhaps, contributed less to the revival of literature, than our own; a circumstance which, in a great measure, secured it from that torrent of pedantry which overwhelmed the rest of Europe. The ignorance of our ancestors kept them unacquainted with the ancients, except through the medium of a French translation. The first labours of the English press brought to light the productions of English literature, which, how rude and barbarous soever, were not confined to the intelligence of the scholar, or the libraries of the learned, but, dispersed throughout the nation, and open to the inspection of all, disseminated a general taste for literature, and gave a slow, gradual polish to our language:

while in every other nation of Europe, the conceits of commentators, and writers of a similar stamp, whose highest ambition it was to add a Latin termination to a High-Dutch name, came into the world, covered with ill-sorted shreds of Cicero and Virgil; like the evil spirits, which have been said to animate a cast-off carcass, previous to their ascension to the regions of light.

THE MICROCOSM, No. 16, March 5, 1787.

Though the writer of this essay seem strongly averse to the establishment of an academy for the cultivation of our language, it should not be forgotten that several literary characters of great eminence have augured well of such an institution; neither do we want an advocate for these societies in the class of our Essayists. In a work entitled "Periodical Essays," and which commenced its course in December 1780, No. 10 is devoted to the recommendation and defence of such a plan. Speaking of the academies of Italy, France, and Spain, the author thus proceeds:

"Yet the English nation, the successful rival of all these in every other branch of literature, has not taken even one step towards the establishment of this very necessary foundation, the basis on which all its claims to literary merit must be erected, the medium through which they must be conveyed. If we have authors who have written with purity, it is their private merit, arising wholly from the perspicuity of their own ideas, and from the attention they have given to that which others have deemed unworthy their regard. The large number of authors who have displayed both knowledge and ingenuity in the several subjects which they have treated, together with the most scandalous deficiency in every rule of grammar, will abundantly justify this last assertion, and, at

the same time, prove, that in purity of style we really are inferior to every other literary nation—perhaps we are the only one, in which publications, faulty in almost every page, disgrace us daily. The modern French authors (the bad ones are meant, the good are out of the question) utter the effusions of their nothingness in correct, the Italians in highly-modulated periods, and dare not to publish even nonsense that is not grammatical; while the Englishman of genius blushes not to deliver the dictates of good sense in a dialect of barbarism. This rooted evil appears to be derived from two causes: the one, that our language, naturally, as all foreigners have complained, and as all writers must be sensible, is very irregular: the other, that we have yielded to the misfortune, as it were, without resistance; that we have never attempted to reduce or expunge the irregularities of which we complain, nor to analyse and fix those elements of grammar, which might introduce a degree of method, and form a real standard of propriety. If we have a dictionary that does not disgrace us, we owe it wholy to the wonderfully laborious and extensivo genius of a single person. Its merits are truly great; considered as the composition of an individual, astonishing. But had this man contributed the large produce of his own labours, and yet been the conductor only, not the sole compiler of the work,—had every other man of literature united his researches, can there be a doubt but that this dictionary would have been more accurate, more extensive, and more complete?

"As every project is liable to opposition, it will not be improper to mention such reasons as may naturally be urged against it, and to attempt to answer them. Some have objected against the French academy, that by too great attention to the refinement of their language, they have deprived it of energy; whence an argument is brought against an establishment of the like nature in England. But we have little danger of that sort to apprehend, from the inflexibility and natural harshness of our language. It is the quality of metals in general to become brittle as you attempt to purify them,

but iron is most malleable as it approaches to fusion. A learned writer of very extensive abilities, in his Rudiments of English Grammar, has given his opinion, 'that a public academy, invested with authority to ascertain the use of words, is unsuitable to the genius of a free nation.' How far a liberal mind may feel itself oppressed by rules drawn from the information and experience of others; or how far a wanton and capricious opposition to that which is right, may constitute freedom, we do not determine. If the import of terms be not ascertained and settled by the intelligent part of mankind, how shall we distinguish the principles of action?

"Let it be again observed, that both the structure and modulation of other languages have been improved by a plan of this nature. Why then should we, who do not, in general, require the incitement of successful example, refuse to avail ourselves of the like advantage? It will not in these days be contended, that the influence of a minister is absolutely necessary to the formation of such a society; or that any patronage is wanting to a set of gentlemen and scholars of this country, who choose to unite in any liberal undertaking; and well it is, that such is our privilege. The royal protection has been bounteously extended, both to societies of art, and to individuals who have cultivated science; and the sovereign's name would be a sanction and an ornament to an English academy. But if that name were denied, and some titled patron were requisite, whom should we address? What powerful name of the present age shall be celebrated to posterity, for the pure love of letters?

"But this patronage is unnecessary; for power without abilities cannot secure respect,—whereas there are now living many persons, in private situations, whose united efforts would soon discover and reform what is faulty in the structure of our language, and reduce our idioms, as nearly as possible, to a grammatical standard, without impairing their energy; whose censure would expunge error, whose judgment would remove scruple, and whose approbation would confirm that which is right. Societies for improvement in the arts, mecha-

nics, and agriculture, have lately been established, and flourish under the influence of some propitious genius; why then should those who wish to cultivate their native tongue, yield to despair, without exertion, or forebode mischance with prosperous omens?"

No. CXIV.

Οἷον δὲ τρέφει ἔρνος ἀνερ ἐριθηλὲς ἐλαίης
Χώρῳ ἐν οἰοπόλῳ, ὅθ' ἅλις ἀναβέβρυχεν ὕδωρ,
Καλὸν, τηλεθάον, τὸ δέ τε πνοιαὶ δονέουσι
Παντοίων ἀνέμων, καί τε βρύει ανθει λευκῷ·
Ἐλθὼν δ' ἐξαπίνης ἄνεμος, σὺν λαίλαπι πολλῇ,
Βοθρυ τ' ἐξέστρεψ, και ἐξετάνυσσ' ἐπὶ γαίῃ.

HOM IL.

As the young olive in some sylvan scene,
Crown'd by fresh fountains with eternal green,
Lifts the gay head, in snowy flow'rets fair.
And plays and dances to the gentle air;
When lo! a whirlwind from high heav'n invades
The tender plant, and withers all its shades;
It lies uprooted in its genial bed,
A lovely ruin, now defac'd and dead.

POPE.

IT is an observation founded on a general survey of mankind, and which I am afraid a closer inspection would not controvert, that one half of the world knows not how the other exists. This, however, might in part be attributed to the insufficiency of human nature, were it not a melancholy truth, that their negligence, in this point, is equal to their ignorance. Nursed in the lap of luxury, the son of fortune, whose budding hopes have never been nipped by the blast of adversity, turns his eyes with contemptuous disgust from the cheerless scenes of penury

and distress, to the dazzling glare, which, under pretence of lulling sorrow, stares reflection out of countenance, and convicts reason of Cynicism by the specious appearance of indulging harmless gaiety. The listless apathist, becalmed in his own insensibility, looks with a vacant eye on the terrors of conflicting passion; or, as the utmost exertion of his pity, endeavours to allay the storm of a weak but generous mind, with the dictatorial precepts of a closeted philosopher.

Those of the above description I warn to proceed no farther in this paper. To the feeling, and, in this community, I should hope, the major part of my readers, the authenticity of the following story will carry with it a sufficient apology.

The father of Frederic having, from an early pique, secluded himself from mankind, devoted an ample fortune to his family, his stables, and his cellar, in the extremity of Somersetshire. He was naturally of a morose, saturnine temper, which a considerable quantity of port, regularly discussed after dinner for a continuance of thirty years, had not a little contributed to heighten. The usual companion of his leisure hours was the parish attorney, a supple knave, who, as occasion served, could rail at the times, praise the wine, take snuff, or ring for

t'other bottle. Argument, it is natural to suppose, would not have beguiled many hours with such a duumvirate; but the squire was too distrustful of any thing human to be circumvented in the common way; and his Achates too much a master of arts to attempt it.

By a feint, therefore, at the first, of opposition, and, at every convenient opportunity, of conviction, he frequently flattered this petty tyrant more agreeably, and sometimes allured him to his own opinion. The subject of his eldest son's education was long on the tapis; the squire being too much of a misanthrope to relish the idea of a public school, and the lawyer too jealous of the boy's growing influence, not to wish so powerful an obstacle removed. At length, however, by a more than usual exertion of artifice, he wheedled the old gentleman out of his prejudices, and, at ten years of age, Frederic was sent to Eton. Even at this early period the natural warmth of his disposition had began to display itself. Open, candid, and generous, his heart was the constant companion of his hand, and his tongue the artless index of his mind. As his ideas expanded, his virtues seemed to acquire a larger scope; and the unsuspecting generosity which had before induced

him heedlessly to deposit his joys and griefs with every stranger, to have been matured into a warm philanthropic benevolence for human nature, and a romantic attachment to the few who were the more immediate objects of his affection. Exposed alike to the attacks of all the generous passions, the impetuous sallies of his temper were as easily suppressed as excited. Jealous, in the extreme, of obligations, and keenly sensitive in any point which appealed to his honour or compassion, he was always a stranger to the calm serenity of a virtuous mind, and ultimately overwhelmed by those feelings which are so often the pleasing cause of a luxuriant imagination.

To these qualifications of the heart, Frederic added the endowments of an elegant fancy; often indeed too impatient of the necessary restrictions of art, but naturally corrected by so pure a taste, as to enable him to discern, with admirable perspicuity, the limits of true and false beauty; and those of his classical compositions which peculiarly struck his ideas, united that vivid, energetic glow of thought which true genius alone can conceive, to a simple chastity of expression which only correct judgment can define. As an agreeable polish

to so much intrinsic merit, his countenance was lively and animated, his figure genteel, and his manners engaging.

In human as in inanimate nature, similar qualities will have a mutual attraction. By directing our thoughts to the same objects; by viewing each other's ideas with a sympathetic benevolence; nay even by those friendly contests, which, in the most perfect unanimity of opinion, the digressive sallies of enthusiasm sometimes give rise to, but which tend only to diversify the calm of universal concurrence, we insensibly glide into that intimate harmony, without which society is but a state of armed neutrality, little superior to the open warfare of savage nature. By each of these ties was a romantic friendship cemented between Frederic and Edmond; their sentiments and inclinations mutually led them to a tender regard for each other's virtues. And as they were equally blessed with all external contingencies towards happiness in future, they looked forward with satisfaction to the scene of active life, which seemed to invite them to the honourable exertion of their abilities.

But, alas! so fair a morning was overcast in its dawn. Frederic's virtues, which, though they could not have prolonged his existence, might

at least have entitled him to a calm resignation of his breath, and the sublime satisfaction of a tranquil mind in the awful moment of dissolution, were blasted by the artful insinuations of a villain. The worthy perpetrator of this precious piece of villany had, by magnifying puerile foibles into the premeditated depravities of a black heart, at length so estranged the affection of his father, as to prevail on him to make a will entirely in his own favour; and the first notice of his displeasure was conveyed to Frederic by the executor, some days after his death.

Melancholy, to a soft and lively mind, is at first an unwelcome stranger; the propensity to indulge its sensations is strongly engrafted in our natures, and we feel our own weakness though we cannot overcome it. It was in vain that Frederic called to mind every consolatory precept which philosophy can so well suggest, but human nature so ill practise, on these occasions; he began to lose his relish for society, and even to avoid the company of a friend, to whom he could now look on his attachment in no other light than as a burden. The quick jealousy of Edmond did not let this alteration pass unobserved. He endeavoured, by an increased attention, to dispel the cloud he per-

ceived lowering on his friend's spirits; but in vain. Resolved, therefore, by one effort, to request that confidence which his esteem taught him he was entitled to, he took the opportunity of communicating one day his observations, and complaining of that reserve which had before been a stranger to their intercourse. Frederic felt this reproach, and resolved to sacrifice his own feelings to those of his friend. "Edmond (said he), hitherto we have lived together in the most uninterrupted union; that we might have died as we have lived, was the fondest hope my imagination ever cherished; that hope is blasted. Whatever may have dictated this letter, I am guiltless of having given the most trivial occasion for it." Edmond read the letter with that mixed emotion which a good mind feels at the calamity of a friend, and the prospect of relieving it. "My friend (he replied), what delicacy would otherwise have prevented me from pressing, your candour has forced from me; need I tell you, that providence has furnished me with ample means for our mutual happiness? Despise, while I have a hand to serve you, the frowns of fortune; and if that should fail, let us encounter poverty together, and die, as we have lived, united."—"No, Edmond, my pride forbids me to live a dependant even on your gene-

rosity; my misery shall never be a burden to you. The wide world is before me; my life has not been so blackened with guilt, but I shall somewhere find an asylum, however wretched, to exchange a miserable existence for a tranquil dissolution: may you run that race of glory which is denied to me; and may the recollection of your lost friend sometimes diffuse a pleasing melancholy over the moment of reflection, but never, never embitter that uninterrupted felicity which your virtues are so amply entitled to!" Edmond had scarce strength to urge his request, till Frederic, foreseeing that the execution of his gloomy purpose might be prevented by the jealous vigilance of his friend, appeared by degrees to soften into compliance, and relieved his anxiety by a momentary affectation of tranquillity. He was scarce, however, retired to his chamber, when, having directed a small note to Edmond, he threw himself into a chaise, and arrived, late in the evening, in the metropolis. Regardless of the objects around him, and solely enveloped in the contemplation of the scene he had just quitted, he threw himself on a bed in the inn at which he alighted; and with partial dozes, which only served to render his situation more horrible, he reflected on his miseries till morning. As soon as it was light he determined

to hire a lodging in some obscure part of the town, where he might elude the prying generosity of his friend, and endeavour to protract a miserable existence, which an enthusiastic sense of religion alone prevented him from sacrificing to despair. For this purpose he fixed on a miserable garret, in those gloomy regions at sight of which even adversity recoils; here, with the assistance of a few books which he had brought with him for the purpose, he endeavoured to beguile that hollow misery which continually preyed on his vitals; and, that no neglect of religious duty might embitter his reflections, determined to apply himself to some means of supporting life. Still, therefore, cherishing the idea of independence, however wretched, he determined to enlist himself among a tribe of translators employed by an eminent bookseller; vainly hoping that, while he earned his miserable pittance by a return of labour, the obligation would be considered as mutual. But he soon found that there is not so abject a slave as a hireling scribbler, nor so tyrannical a despot as an illiterate churl, who pays for learning and potatoes with the same remorseless stupidity.

The imperious arrogance of this bashaw, and the gross adulation and vulgar merriment of his fellow servants, was little suited to the proud

sensibility of Frederic. He endured, however, the insults of the one and jests of the others, till a fever, brought on by his continual agitation of spirits, actually deprived him of this means of earning a subsistence, and stretched him on his truckle bed amidst all the horrors of famine, indigence, disease, and despair.

In the mean time, Edmond, whose violent affliction for the departure of his friend, had, for some time, reduced his life to a precarious situation, as soon as he found his health in some degree re-established, detemined to abandon a spot which only presented to his mind a gloomy recollection of the days that were gone, and to follow the fortunes of his friend. Having accordingly laid the circumstances before his father, he obtained a full permission to gratify his inclination. He repaired to London, as supposing Frederic would abscond to some obscure spot of a labyrinth in which he was most likely to be effectually concealed.

After a fortnight's search, when a settled gloom had begun to throw a damp on all his hopes of success, happening one day to enter the shop of Frederic's late employer, he overheard the literary monarch enforcing his daily rebuke with sundry oaths and ejaculations; and, among other particulars, bitterly complaining of the

absence of the pale dismal young man, who had lately enlisted in his service. The description immediately figured to his imagination his dejected friend;—tremblingly alive with this idea, he eagerly inquired his lodging, determining immediately to satisfy the fearful curiosity which his late absence had inspired. His first emotions a little subsided, he resolved previously to apply for medical assistance; that in case of any urgent necessity, it might be at hand. For this purpose he visited the late Dr. ——; and it was by his advice, that he determined to spare his friend's weak and exhausted spirits the agitation of a sudden interview.

It was not without considerable emotion that Edmond entered a a dreary hut, whose very appearance was calculated to inspire misery; it was from the hag who owned this mansion that he learned, that her lodger had for some time kept his bed; and was so reduced by three days' almost total abstinence, as to be frequently deprived of understanding. Shocked as he was at this information, he saw the propriety of the physician's advice sufficiently to take his stand at the door of the apartment, in order to watch the most favourable opportunity for an interview.

Frederic's strength had been that evening so

far exhausted by a preceding delirium as to afford him for a short time the wretched possession of his faculties. He was kneeling, with great apparent agony, before a bible, and grasping, with a convulsive gripe, the foot of his bed, as if, by the exertion of his nerves, to awaken his fainting soul from the torpor which seemed to be gathering on it at every interval of impassioned frenzy. There is, in solitary misery, a comfortless horror in brooding over misfortunes, which far exceeds the cutting pangs we feel when those we love are involved in our calamities. In the latter situation we have a pleasing object to rest the external sense on; and the very gratification of our feelings, on such an occasion, diffuses a tranquil luxury over our sorrows; in the former, all is dark and comfortless, and a gnawing horror perpetually suggests ideas, which the gangrened imagination, while it trembles to nourish, is unable to resist the indulgence of. Such was the situation of Frederic, when the recollection of the past, the horror of the present, and the prospect of the future, drew from the bottom of his soul, "Oh! that I had the wings of a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest." Edmond could, at this ejaculation, no longer contain himself, but rushing into the room, and hanging over his

fainting friend, "All may yet be well," said he; "we may yet live to renew our pleasures; to pursue those fond projects which your too delicate generosity has so cruelly interrupted!" The well-known voice sounded on Frederic's dying senses, and recalled a momentary exertion of his languid spirit; "Never, never; it is past! Oh! Edmond, it is past!" then, darting a look of despairing agony to heaven, he exclaimed, in a trembling voice, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" and, sinking into the arms of his friend, groaned out his soul, and expired.

MICROSCOSM, No. 19, March 19, 1787.

No. CXV.

——— Neglectum adhibere clientem.
JUVENAL.

A long neglected client to admit.
DRYDEN.

I FEEL myself so much obliged by the continued notice of my correspondents, that I should consider myself as highly ungrateful, if I did not sometimes leave wholly to them the entertainment of my readers.

Ἡδὲ τρίτηγε καὶ ΜΕΣΗ τῶν ειρηνων δυοῖν Αρμονιων ἣν ΚΟΙΝΗΝ καλῶ σπανειτε κυρίȣ καὶ ΚΡΕΙΤΤΟΝΟΣ Ὀνόματος, σχῆμα μέν ἴδιον ȣδὲν ἔχει, κεκεραται δὲ πως ἐξ ἐκείνων μετρίως. ΚΑΙ ΕΣΤΙΝ ΕΚΛΟΓΗ ΤΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ἙΚΑΤΕΡΑ ΚΡΑΤΙΣΤΩΝ. ΔΙΟΝΥΣ. Περὶ ΣΥΝΘ. Τμ. κδ.

"But this third, and middle of the two styles already mentioned, which, from want of a better name, I call the common, has no peculiar dress of its own; but is composed equally of both the other, and is, as it were, a selection of the beauties of each."

"Sir,

"As being commendably and successfully engaged in the same track, perhaps you will

accept this vindication of an illustrious predecessor in the province of a periodical essayist; the inventor of that happy mode of imparting knowledge, of cultivating taste, and of recommending virtue.

"I, therefore, make use of the medium of your paper, to entreat the public clemency in favour of an author, who, though more than passable for his day, is in danger of being absolutely eclipsed by the transcendant radiance of these modern luminaries; or, to speak with antiquated simplicity, whose supposed purity of style is falling into contempt, from a comparison with the perfect models exhibited by the Johnsonian school; though of that school the more characteristic merit, perhaps, be 'turgid eloquence,' expressed in a style which no inferior genius could harmonise with such eloquence; 'a style refined to a degree of immaculate purity.' You see, sir, that when deviating into the silly plainness of the unpolished days of Anne, I exalt my phrase, and reinforce my style, by calling in auxiliaries of a nobler port and gigantic elevation; auxiliaries, who, by the union of incompatible qualities, may, consistently, be accounted potent beyond the limits of possibility. But till a perfect uniformity of style be established among men, till

the 'want of a consecutive series of senses, in their nature collateral, when the radical idea branches into parallel ramifications,' shall be tunefully lamented by the maidens, and significantly recited by the lisping babes, the rude and the ignorant, in their advancement to a happier cultivation, may be permitted to indulge themselves with an occasional page of Addison. It is indeed for this unfortunate writer, that I dare to plead; notwithstanding he is convicted of two such faults in style (if one be not rather of the sentiment), as would render any one who has written so long since, and upon such subjects, utterly unworthy to be read:—'feebleness and inanity.' I will not say, that to those who walk on stilts, a natural walk may appear a feeble one; or that where there is nothing gross, nothing crowded, nothing out of it's place, the medium pure, the object of aerial brightness, it may be lost to some in the simplicity of its own light; like the sky of a summer's evening, without clouds or mist. I will not say this, because it must occur to critics who are so accomplished as to see Addison so far beneath them. But I must say something respecting the 'middle style,' of which he is ironically accused. For the formidable censor, ex cathedrâ, thus pronounces,

'I am not willing to deprive him of the honour implied in Johnson's testimony, that his prose is the model of the middle style; but if he be but a mediocrist, he is surely not a subject of imitation; it being a rule, that of examples, the best are always to be selected.'

"Now here I must move in arrest of judgment, 'for that in the record there is manifest error,' and shall contend, with certainty of success, that, upon the face of the indictment, no crime is charged; that he is, perhaps, the only instance in our virtuous days, of a person indicted and convicted of a virtue. But the 'middle style,' is first taken as synonymous with 'the middling one,' and that being equivalent to indifferent, low, vulgar, &c. Addison is concluded to have been thus an author of the middle style. But, sir, the word is a word of good fame and honourable estimation. It shall not, like the innocent Quaker, be brought under the disgrace of prostitution, because another word of very different character appears habited like it.

"If I were to call my witnesses to its reputation, I could fill the court with the first literary worthies, from Aristotle to Harris of Salisbury. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Longinus, Hermogenes, Quintilian, Cicero himself, at

once the commender and the great example—are perpetual in its praise. The ΜΕΣΗ, the ΚΟΙΝΗ Λεξις, the æquabile et temperatum dicendi genus, has Homer, Isocrates in his best productions, Demosthenes in parts of his most finished compositions, Plato in a variety of beautiful instances, Xenophon in his general character, Virgil and Livy, for its examples: it is placed in literature as the golden mean in ethics; the virtue between the extremes of the austere and the luxuriant. The sons of Eton, those who have been formed by a Barnard or a Foster, those who now listen to a Davies, have this evidence already in their breasts. But, sir, I call no witness: I am not moving for a new trial upon a verdict by misdirection and against evidence—though upon that I must proceed if this were denied me:—But, I plead in arrest of judgment, that there is no crime on the record. That the legal sense of the middle style is perfectly ascertained in the courts of criticism; and were it necessary to cite a written authority, in affirmance of the common law of good sense and taste, in so clear a case, I would cite one which would be acknowledged, by the judge who has pronounced this sentence, to be equal to an act of parliament; though it be but an ordinance

or a proclamation of the late literary monarch; the words of Johnson himself deciding on Addison: 'His prose is the model of the Middle Style. On grave subjects not formal, on light occasions not grovelling; pure without scrupulosity, and exact without apparent elaboration: Always equable, and always easy; without glowing words or pointed sentences. Addison never deviates from his track to snatch a grace; he seeks no ambitious ornaments, and tries no hazardous innovations. His page is always luminous, but never blazes with unexpected splendour;—if his language had been less idiomatical (this is his "adoption of vulgar phrase"), it would have lost something of its genuine Anglicism. He is never feeble; and he did not wish to be energetic; he is never rapid, and he never stagnates. His sentences have neither studied amplitude, nor affected brevity. His periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and easy. Whoever wishes to attain an English Style, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.'

"This is the middle style, for which Addison is to be condemned, in the sense of the very author from whom censure is inferred; supposed latent in the use of this expression. This the feebleness! and were I to speak to the inanity imputed, I might cite the fine passage, which pre-

cedes that which I have transcribed, and in which Addison is deservedly honoured as a teacher of moral wisdom, of rational religion, in every interesting, every engaging form, which attractive fiction can lend, or the simple elegance of truth present. Of the true, the graceful, and the virtuously-conciliating in domestic life, he was not less a teacher; with a persuasive ease, a delicacy, a pathetic mildness, whose influence can never be entirely without effect on the heart of any of his readers. I would appeal to his Visions of Mirza; to his allegory on the origin of the connection between Pain and Pleasure, extended to a noble conclusion from the idea hinted by Socrates; to his Essay on Religion and Prayer, for the higher instances; to his character of Ruricola and the Cornelii, to the serious and sentimental part of his inimitable portrait of the Good Old Knight, and a variety of his other compositions, adapted to all the social offices between individuals, for the rest. Nor, as a critic, can he ever be meanly valued; whether we regard his merit of introducing Milton to popular notice, more extensively than would otherwise have been effected even by the approbation of Sommers; or his Essays on the Pleasures of the Imagination, to which modern refinement of investigation may yet find itself much obliged, and modern ele-

gance of style may be challenged to no easy competition. I might appeal again to Johnson; but to vouch external testimony in proof of such excellence, borders on the charge of ridiculous anxiety; it is

> To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
> To throw a perfume on the violet.

"For one hint, as it is given by Johnson, I shall make no apology. 'Addison is now despised by some, who, perhaps, never would have seen his defects, but by the light he afforded them.' Yet I hope it is by some only; and that many retain their veneration for a name to which our language, our taste, our manners, are singularly indebted; and who, first of our English writers, presented virtue to our view, introduced by cheerfulness, and attended by the graces.

"I am,
"Sir,
"Yours most respectfully,
"AN ETONIAN."

THE MICROCOSM, No. 36, July 16, 1787.

The criticism of Sir John Hawkins on the style of Addison, so ably refuted in this essay, has been treated, likewise, with the contempt which it deserves, by a critic in the Monthly Review, who concludes his observations by a

humorous and not unfaithful representation of the peculiarities of Sir John's style:

"Of Addison, Johnson used to say, 'He is the Raphael of Essay writers.' Sir John is of a different opinion: Addison he thinks deserving of praise, if we make his cold and languid periods the test of elegant composition. Our critic loves the antiquated phrase of the state papers in the Cabala, and the precatory eloquence of former ages. The characteristics of Addison, he says, are feebleness and inanity, though his sentiments are excellent, and his humour exquisite. What does Sir John mean? Where there are sentiment and humour, can there be inanity? He allows, with Johnson, that his prose is the model of the middle style. The misfortune is, he thinks the middle style and a middling style synonimous terms. He does not know, that, by the ablest critics, style has been distinguished into three modes, the sublime, the simple, and the florid or mixed; and that the last, holding often the qualities of the two others, is called the middle style. Because the last is ascribed to Addison, the Knight concludes that Johnson meant to call him a mediocrist. The fact is, Johnson had taste enough to relish Addison, though he did not copy him. Sir John most probably acquired his notions of language at his master's desk: he admired the phraseology of deeds and parchments; whereof, to speak in his own manner, he read so much, that, in consequence thereof, he has been chiefly conversant therein; and by the help of the parchments aforesaid, he has not much improved thereby, but has entirely missed the elegance above-mentioned, and uses words, that in them we sometimes meet with, and, being bred an attorney, he caught the language of the said trade, whereof he retains so much, that he is now rendered an incompetent critic thereby, and in consequence thereof.

* ...LY REVIEW, Old Series, vol. lxxvii. p. 68 and 69.

No. CXVI.

Servatâ semper lege et ratione loquendi.

JUVENAL.

Let your conversation be always regulated by a consideration of the purposes for which it was designed, and by the observance of a mutual attention and decorum.

THE different writers who have obliged the world with memoirs of Dr. Johnson, all agree to inform us, that he esteemed conversation to be the comfort of life. He himself, indeed, in an Idler, has not scrupled to compare it to a bowl of that liquor, which, under the direction of Mr. Brydone, so deservedly engaged the attention of the Sicilian clergy; and in the composition of which, while the spirit is duly tempered by water, and the acid sufficiently corrected by sugar, the ingredients wonderfully conspire to form the most delicious beverage known among mortals.

But whether it be that the requisites for producing conversation, like those for making punch, are not always to be had, or are not good in their kind, or not properly mixed, certain it is, that in the former case, as in the latter, the operation does not at all times succeed to the satisfaction of the company; nothing be-

ing more common than to hear persons complaining, that after many hours passed in this way, they have found neither improvement nor entertainment.

Without study or method, I shall set down such thoughts as may occur to my mind on this most interesting subject.

That conversation may answer the ends for which it was designed, the parties who are to join in it, must come together with a determined resolution to please and to be pleased. If a man feels that an east wind has rendered him dull and sulky, he should by all means stay at home till the wind changes, and not be troublesome to his friends; for dulness is infectious, and one sour face will make many, as one cheerful countenance is soon productive of others. If two gentlemen desire to quarrel, it should not be done in a company met to enjoy the pleasures of conversation. Let a stage be erected for the purpose in a proper place, to which the jurisdiction of the Middlesex magistrates doth not reach. There let Martin and Mendoza mount, accompanied by Ben and Johnson, and attended by the amateurs, who delight to behold blows neatly laid in, ribs and jaw-bones elegantly broken, and eyes sealed up with delicacy and address. It is obvious, for these reasons, that

he who is about to form a conversation party, should be careful to invite men of congenial minds, and of similar ideas respecting the entertainment of which they are to partake, and to which they must contribute.

With gloomy persons, gloomy topics likewise should be (as indeed they will be) excluded, such as ill health, bad weather, bad news, or forebodings of such, &c. &c. To preserve the temper calm and pleasant, it is of unspeakable importance, that we always accustom ourselves through life to make the best of things, to view them on their bright side, and so represent them to others, for our mutual comfort and encouragement. Few things (especially if, as Christians, we take the other world into the account) but have a bright side: diligence and practice will easily find it. Perhaps there is no circumstance better calculated than this, to render conversation equally pleasing and profitable.

In the conduct of it, be not eager to interrupt others, or uneasy at being yourself interrupted; since you speak either to amuse or instruct the company, or to receive those benefits from it. Give all, therefore, leave to speak in turn. Hear with patience, and answer with precision. Inattention is ill manners: it shews contempt; and contempt is never forgiven.

Trouble not the company with your private concerns, as you do not love to be troubled with those of others. Yours are as little to them, as theirs are to you. You will need no other rule whereby to judge of this matter.

Contrive, but with dexterity and propriety, that each person may have an opportunity of discoursing on the subject with which he is best acquainted. He will be pleased, and you will be informed. By observing this rule, every one has it in his power to assist in rendering conversation agreeable; since, though he may not choose, or be qualified to say much himself, he can propose questions to those who are able to answer them.

Avoid stories, unless short, pointed, and quite a-propos. He who deals in them, says Swift, must either have a very large stock, or a good memory, or must often change his company. Some have a set of them strung together like onions: they take possession of the conversation by an early introduction of one, and then you must have the whole rope; and there is an end of every thing else, perhaps, for that meeting, though you may have heard all twenty times before.

Talk often but not long. The talent of haranguing in private company is insupportable.

Senators and barristers are apt to be guilty of this fault; and members who never harangue in the house will often do it out of the house. If the majority of the company be naturally silent, or cautious, the conversation will flag, unless it be often renewed by one among them, who can start new subjects. Forbear, however, if possible to broach a second before the first is out, lest your stock should not last, and you should be obliged to come back to the old barrel. There are those who will repeatedly cross upon, and break into the conversation, with a fresh topic, till they have touched upon all, and exhausted none. Economy here is necessary for most people.

Laugh not at your own wit and humour; leave that to the company. When the conversation is flowing in a serious and useful channel, never interrupt it by an ill-timed jest. The stream is scattered, and cannot again be collected.

Discourse not in a whisper, or half voice, to your next neighbour. It is ill breeding, and, in some degree, a fraud; conversation-stock being, as one has well observed, a joint and common property.

In reflections on absent people, go no farther than you would go if they were present. "I resolve (says Bishop Beveridge) never to speak

of a man's virtues before his face, nor his faults behind his back;" a golden rule! the observation of which would, at one stroke, banish flattery and defamation from the earth.

Conversation is affected by circumstances, which, at first sight, may appear trifling, but really are not so. Some, who continue dumb while seated, become at once loquacious when they are (as the senatorial phrase is) upon their legs. Others, whose powers languish in a close room, recover themselves on putting their heads into fresh air, as a shrovetide cock does when his head is put into fresh earth. A turn or two in the garden makes them good company. There is a magic sometimes in a large circle, which fascinates those who compose it into silence; and nothing can be done, or, rather, nothing can be said, till the introduction of a card-table breaks up the spell, and releases the valiant knights and fair damsels from captivity. A table, indeed, of any kind, considered as a centre of union, is of eminent service to conversation at all times; and never do we more sensibly feel the truth of that old philosophical axiom, that nature "abhors a vacuum," than upon its removal. I have been told, that even in the blue-stocking society, formed solely for the purpose of conversation, it was found, after repeated

trials, impossible to get on, without one card-table. In that same venerable society, when the company is too widely extended to engage in the same conversation, a custom is said to prevail—and a very excellent one it is—that every gentleman upon his entrance selects his partner, as he would do at a ball; and when the conversation dance is gone down, the company change partners, and begin afresh. Whether these things be so or not, most certain it is, that the lady or the gentleman deserves well of the society, who can devise any method whereby so valuable an amusement can be heightened and improved.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 7, April 28, 1787.

The reader of this pleasing and useful paper, may see the subject illustrated more at large in the poem of Cowper entitled "Conversation," from which the following lines might be selected as forming an excellent motto for our paper:

Though conversation, in its better part,
May be esteem'd a gift and not an art,
Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,
On culture, and the sowing of the soil.
Words learn'd by wrote a parrot may rehearse,
But talking is not always to converse:
Not more distinct from harmony divine,
The constant creaking of a country sign.—
Sacred interpreter of human thought,
How few respect or use thee as they ought!
But all shall give account of ev'ry wrong,
Who dare dishonour or defile the tongue.

There is in the "Conversation" of Cowper one illustration so exquisitely pleasing and appropriate, that I cannot forbear giving it a place in this note; the poet, enforcing the occasional necessity for conversation of a serious and religious cast, adds—

It happen'd, on a solemn even tide,
Soon after He that was our surety died,
Two bosom friends, each pensively inclin'd,
The scene of all those sorrows left behind,
Sought their own village, busied, as they went,
In musings worthy of the great event:
They spake of him they loved, of him whose life,
Though blameless, had incurr'd perpetual strife,
Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,
A deep memorial graven on their hearts.
The recollection, like a vein of ore,
The farther trac'd, enrich'd them still the more;
They thought him, and they justly thought him, one
Sent to do more than he appear'd t' have done;
T' exalt a people, and to place them high
Above all else, and wonder'd he should die.
Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A stranger join'd them, courteous as a friend,
And ask'd them, with a kind engaging air,
What their affliction was, and begg'd a share.
Inform'd, he gather'd up the broken thread,
And, truth and wisdom gracing all he said,
Explain'd, illustrated, and search'd so well,
The tender theme on which they chose to dwell,
That reaching home, The night, they said, is near,
We must not now be parted, sojourn here—
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,
And made so welcome at their simple feast,
He bless'd the bread, but vanish'd at the word,
And left them both exclaiming, 'Twas the Lord!
Did not our hearts feel all he deign'd to say?
Did they not burn within us by the way?

Now theirs was converse such as it behoves
Man to maintain, and such as God approves.

No. CXVII.

Manè salutantum totis vomit ædibus undam.
VIRGIL.

Whose portals proud
Each morning vomit out the cringing croud
WARTON.

AMONG the grievances of modern days, much complained of, but with little hope of redress, is the matter of receiving and paying visits; the number of which, it is generally agreed, "has been increasing, is increased, and ought to be diminished." You meet frequently with people, who will tell you, they are worn to death by visiting; and that what with morning visits, and afternoon visits, dining visits, and supping visits, tea-drinking visits, and card-playing visits, exclusive of balls and concerts, for their parts, they have not an hour to themselves in the four and twenty; but they must go home and dress, or they shall be too late for their visit.

Nor is this complaint, by any means, peculiar to the times in which we have the honour to live. Cowley was out of all patience on the subject above a hundred years ago.

"If we engage (says he) in a large acquaintance, and various familiarities, we set open our gates to the invaders of most of our time: we expose our life to a quotidian ague of frigid impertinences, which would make a wise man tremble to think of."

But, as Cowley was apt to be a little out of humour between whiles, let us hear the honourable, pious, and sweet-tempered Mr. Boyle, who, among the troubles of life, enumerates, as one, "the business of receiving senseless visits, whose continuance, if otherwise unavoidable, is capable, in my opinion, to justify the retiredness of a hermit."

Bishop Jeremy Taylor is clear, that, "men will find it impossible to do any thing greatly good, unless they cut off all superfluous company and visits."

If we consult the ladies (as indeed we ought to do upon all occasions), we find it recorded, by Ballard, of the very learned and excellent Mrs. Astell, that "when she saw needless visitors coming, whom she knew to be incapable of conversing on any useful subject, but coming merely for the sake of chat and tattle, she would look out of the window and jestingly tell them (as Cato did Nasica), Mrs. Astell is not at home; and,

in good earnest, kept them out, not suffering such triflers to make inroads upon her more serious hours."

And now what shall we say to these things? For, after all, nothing can be more certain than, whatever learned or unlearned folk may pretend to the contrary, visit we must, or the world will be at an end; we may as well go supercargoes to Botany-bay at once.

Distinction is the parent of perspicuity. Suppose, therefore, we take in order the different sorts of visits above-mentioned, and consider them (as a worthy and valuable author phrases it) "with their roots, reasons, and respects."

And first of the first, namely, morning visits. It is evident that, as things are now regulated amongst us, all visits of business must be made at this season; for we dine late for this very purpose; and no gentleman does any thing after dinner but—drink. In the days of our forefathers, under Elizabeth, and her successor James, it was otherwise; for Bishop Andrews, we are told, entertained hopes of a person who had been guilty of many faults and follies, till, one day, the young man happened unfortunately to call in a morning. Then the good bishop gave him up.

Mrs. Astell herself would not have disdained

to take her share in a little chat and tattle over the tea-table. They may be styled correlatives, and go together as naturally as ham and chickens.

If it be asked, what number of friends it is expedient to collect, in order to make a visit comfortable, I must confess myself unable to answer the question, so diverse are the opinions and customs that have prevailed in different ages and countries. Among ourselves, at present, if one were to lay down a general rule, it should be done, perhaps, in these words,—The more, the merrier.

Some years ago, these multitudinous meetings were known by the various names of assemblies, routs, drums, tempests, hurricanes, and earthquakes. If you made a morning visit to a lady, she would tell you very gravely, what a divine rout, a sweet hurricane, or a charming earthquake, she had been at the night before.

To have discussed all these subdivisions of visits, and distinguished properly the nature of each, as considered in itself, would have been an arduous task; from which I find myself happily relieved by the modern very judicious adoption of the term "party," which is what the logicians style an universal, and includes every thing of the kind.

A company of twelve at dinner, with a rein-

forcement of eighteen at tea and cards, may, I believe, be called a small party, which a lady may attend without any assistance from the hair-dresser.

There is one maxim never to be departed from; namely, that the smallness of the house is no objection to the largeness of the party. The reason is, that, as these meetings are chiefly holden in the winter, the company may keep one another warm.

But this will not, in every instance, be the case, after all the care and pains upon earth. For, when the other apartments were full, I have known four persons shut into a closet at Christmas, without fire or candle, playing a rubber by the light of a sepulchral lamp, suspended from the ceiling.

At another time, the butler, opening a cupboard to take out the apparatus for the lemonade, with the nice decanters to prevent mischief in case of weak stomachs, found two little misses, whom the lady of the house, ever anxious to promote the happiness of all her friends, had squeezed and pinioned in there, to form a snug party at cribbage.

An accident happened, last winter, at one of these amicable associations, from a contrary cause, where the fluids in the human frame had

suffered too great a degree of rarefaction. A gentleman, making a precipitate retreat, on finding himself inflated, like a balloon, with a large dose of gas, or burnt air in him, tumbled over a card table, which (that no room might be lost) had been set upon a landing-place of the stairs. The party, with all the implements of trade, table, cards, candle, and counters, and the unfortunate person who had brought on the catastrophe, rolled down together. No farther mischief, however, was done; and two gentlemen of the party, as I have been well informed, found time to make a bet on the odd trick before they got to the bottom.

But these are trifling circumstances, and no more than may be expected to fall to the lot of humanity. I do not mention them, I am sure, as constituting any objection to a party, or as affording any reason why one should deprive one's-self of the pleasure one always has in seeing one's friends about one.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 9, May 12, 1787.

No. CXVIII.

Si non ingentem foribus domus alta superbis
Manè salutantum totis vomit ædibus undam—
At secura quies.

VIRGIL.

Though not high domes, through all their portals wide,
Each morn disgorge the flatterers' refluent tide,
Yet peace is thine.

SOTHEBY.

I MADE an entrance, in my last paper, on the important subject of visiting, and distinguished the different kinds of visits now in vogue amongst us, with their excellencies and defects.

It is hard, indeed, to guess at the pleasure of assembling in very large parties. There is much heat, hurry, and fatigue, to all who are concerned. The essence of the entertainment seems to consist in a crowd, and none appear to be perfectly happy while they can stir hand or foot. At least, this is the case with the lady of the house, whose supreme felicity it is, to be kept in equilibrio by an equilateral pressure from all quarters. Fixed in her orb, like the sun of the system, she dispenses the favour of her nods and smiles on those bodies, which—I which I could say—move around her; but that they cannot do.

But though pleasure be not obtained, trouble, perhaps, it may be said, is saved, by receiving a multitude at once, instead of being subject to their perpetual incursions in separate bodies; and when the polite mob has been at my house I am at rest for some time.—True: but then there is a reciprocity; and as others have assisted in making your mob a decent and respectable one, you must do the same by them, and every evening will pass in this rondeau of delights; a vortex, out of which none can emerge, and into which more and more are continually drawn, for fear of being left in solitude; as all who wish to visit will very soon be obliged to visit after this method, or not at all. From the metropolis the fashion has made its way into provincial towns, all the visitable inhabitants of which will be assembled together at one house or other through the winter; and this, though perhaps there is not a single person among them, who does not dislike and complain of the custom, as absurd and disagreeable.

For the conduct of these visits no directions can be laid down; but concerning others (while any such shall remain) where a moderate company of neighbours meet, to pass a little time in conversation, some observations may be offered.

They are useful, and, indeed, necessary, to maintain a friendly and social intercourse, without which we are not in a capacity to give or receive help and assistance from each other.

They are useful to cheer and refresh the spirits after business, and may render us fitter to return to it again.

They are useful, when they are made with a view of relieving and comforting such as are afflicted or distressed; and that, not only in great and signal troubles, but the common cares and concerns of life; of advising, exhorting, and consoling such as, having weak and low spirits, are oppressed by anxiety and melancholy; of which in England the number always has been, and always will be, very considerable. Time is well employed in these and the like good offices, where a friend is the best physician. The very sight of a cheerful friend is often like the sun breaking forth in a cloudy day. A melancholy person is at least as much the object of charity as a sick one. The cheerful owe this duty to those who are otherwise; and enjoy, themselves, the most refined and exalted kind of pleasure, when they find their endeavours succeed.

Visits are useful, when they become the means of acquiring or communicating useful knowledge, relative to the conduct of life, in

concerns either personal or domestic; or, even when no such knowledge is obtained, if by innocent mirth, pleasant tales, &c. people are brought into good humour, and kept in it. No recreation is more truly serviceable and effectual than this: and it is said of Archbishop Williams, that, "the greater the performance he was about to undertake (whether a speech, a sermon, or a debate), the more liberty and recreation he first took, to quicken and open his spirits, and to clear his thoughts."

By visiting, opportunities are offered of introducing, occasionally, matters literary and religious, new publications, &c. For though, perhaps, this is not so often done as it might be, when people meet; yet it cannot be done at all, unless people do meet.

To render visits lively and agreeable, where the company is small, and it can be managed conveniently, the conversation should be general. The ladies, by their sprightliness, should animate the gentlemen; and the gentlemen, by their learning, inform the ladies. Instead of this, the gentlemen too often lay their heads together, on one side of the room, and talk on subjects of literature or politics; leaving the ladies to settle the articles of caps and gowns, blonds and gawzes, on the other; which is hardly fair, espe-

cially in these days, when so many of the other sex are qualified to join in the conversation on more important topics.

The end of a visit is frustrated, if it be made too long; as when the same company sit together from three in the afternoon till twelve at night, or nine hours; for, then, that which was designed for a recreation becomes itself a burden, unless there be some particular business or amusement in hand.

Live not in a perpetual round and hurry of visiting. You will neglect your affairs at home; you will by degrees contract a dislike to home, and a dread of being alone; than which nothing can be more wretched and pernicious. You will acquire a habit of being idle, of gossiping, dealing in slander, scandal, &c. and of inducing others to do the same.

In a small party, as also in a single family, the work basket and a book agree well together. While the ladies work, let one person read distinctly and deliberately, making proper pauses for remarks and observations: these will furnish conversation for a while; when it begins to flag, let the reader go on, till fresh matter supply fresh conversation. A winter evening passes pleasantly in this manner, and a general wish will be expressed, that it had been longer.

The mind becomes stored with knowledge, and the tongue accustomed to speak upon profitable subjects.

Rousseau asserts, that every person in a company should have something to do. I see not how this can well be contrived; but his reason is curious, and deserves consideration. "In my opinion," says he, "idleness is no less the pest of society, than of solitude. Nothing contracts the mind, nothing engenders trifles, tales, backbiting, slander, and falsities, so much as being shut up in a room, opposite each other, and reduced to no other occupation than the necessity of continual chattering. When all are employed, they speak only when they have something to say; but if you are doing nothing, you must absolutely talk incessantly, which of all constraints is the most troublesome, and the most dangerous. I dare go even farther, and maintain, that to render a circle truly agreeable, every one must be not only doing something, but something which requires a little attention."

Should this plan of Rousseau be favourably received, and a notion be entertained, of carrying it into execution, the chief difficulty will be to provide proper employment for the gentlemen. My readers will turn the matter in their

minds. The only case in point, which I can recollect of at present, is that of a friend who, when young, amused himself with making partridge nets. On a visit he would take his work out of a bag, hitch one end of the net upon a sconce, and proceed to business. His example militates powerfully in favour of the plan; for his conversation, while so employed, was remarkably free and easy.

Under the above regulations we can never be the worse, and, if we keep tolerable company, shall generally be the better for a visit. Something must occur, which is worth remembering, and noting down. A reflection at the end of a visit will soon shew, whether it comes properly under the denomination of those condemned by casuists as useless and impertinent; since that is useless which tends to no good purpose; and that is impertinent, which claims your time and attention, and gives nothing in return.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 12, June 2, 1787.

No. CXIX.

The short and simple annals of the poor.
GRAY.

Sir,

If you should esteem this little tale worth a place in your amusing publication, you will probly hear more from him, who is yours,

A Wanderer.

Being on a tour to the North, I was one evening arrested in my progress at the entrance of a small hamlet, by breaking the forewheel of my phaeton. This accident rendering it impracticable for me to proceed to the next town, from which I was now sixteen miles distant, I directed my steps to a small cottage, at the door of which, in a woodbine arbor, sat a man of about sixty, who was solacing himself with a pipe. In the front of his house was affixed a small board, which I conceived to contain an intimation, that travellers might there be accommodated. Addressing myself to the old man, I requested his assistance, which he readily granted; but on my mentioning an intention of remaining at his house all night, he regretted that

it was not in his power to receive me, and the more so, as there was no inn in the village.—It was not till now that I discovered my error concerning the board over the door, which contained a notification, that there was taught that useful art, of which, if we credit Mrs. Baddeley's Memoirs, a certain noble lord was so grossly ignorant. In short, my friend proved to be the schoolmaster, and, probably, secretary, to the hamlet. Affairs were in this situation when the vicar made his appearance. He was one of the most venerable figures I had ever seen; his time-silvered locks shaded his temples, whilst the lines of misfortune were, alas! too visible in his countenance. Time had softened, but could not efface them.—On seeing my broken equipage, he addressed me; and when he began to speak, his countenance was illumined by a smile.—" I presume, sir (said he), that the accident you have just experienced will render it impossible for you to proceed. Should that be the case, you will be much distressed for lodging, the place affording no accommodations for travellers, as my parishioners are neither willing nor able to support an ale-house; and as we have few travellers, we have little need of one: but if you will accept the best accommodation my cottage affords, it is much at your

service."—After expressing the sense I entertained of his goodness, I joyfully accepted so desirable an offer. As we entered the hamlet, the sun was gilding, with his departing beams, the village spire, whilst a gentle breeze refreshed the weary hinds, who, seated beneath the venerable oaks that overshadowed their cottages, were reposing themselves after the labours of the day, and listening attentively to the tale of an old soldier, who, like myself, had wandered thus far, and was now distressed for a lodging. He had been in several actions, in one of which he had lost a leg; and was now, like many other brave fellows,

> Doom'd to beg
> His bitter bread through realms his valour sav'd.

My kind host invited me to join the crowd, and listen to his tale. With this request I readily complied. No sooner did we make our appearance, than I attracted the attention of every one. The appearance of a stranger in a hamlet two hundred miles from the capital, is generally productive of surprise; and every one examines the new comer with the most attentive observation. So wholly did my arrival engross the villagers, that the veteran was obliged to defer the continuation of his narrative, till their curiosity

should be gratified. Every one then took an opportunity of testifying the good will they bore my venerable host, by offering him a seat on the grass. The good man and myself were soon seated, and the brave veteran resumed his narrative in the following words:—" After (continued he) I had been intoxicated, I was carried before a justice, who was intimate with the captain, at whose request he attested me before I had sufficiently recovered my senses to see the danger I was encountering. In the morning, when I came to myself, I found I was in custody of three or four soldiers, who, after telling me what had happened, in spite of all I could say, carried me to the next town, without permitting me to take leave of one of my neighbours. When they reached the town, it was market-day, and I saw several of the people from our village, who were all sorry to hear what had happened, and endeavoured to procure my release, but in vain. After taking an affecting leave of my neighbours, I was marched to Portsmouth, and there, together with a hundred more, embarked for the coast of Africa. During the voyage, most of our number died, or became so enfeebled by sickness as to make them unfit for service. This was owing partly to the climate, partly to the want of water, and to

confinement in the ship. When we reached the coast of Africa, we were landed, and experienced every possible cruelty from our officers. At length, however, a man of war arrived, who had lost several mariners in a late action; and I, with some others, was sent on board to serve in that station. Soon after we put to sea, we fell in with a French man of war. In the action I lost my leg, and was near being thrown overboard; but the humanity of the chaplain preserved my life, and, on my return to England, procured my discharge. I applied for the Chelsea bounty; but it was refused me, because I lost my limb when acting as a marine; and, as I was not a regular marine, I was not entitled to any protection from the admiralty. Therefore I am reduced to live on the good will of those who pity my misfortunes. To be sure, mine is a hard lot; but the king does not know it, or (God bless his Majesty!) he is too good to let those starve who have fought his battles."

The village clock now striking eight, the worthy vicar rose, and slipping something into the old man's hand, desired me to follow him. At our departure, the villagers promised to take care of the old man. We returned the farewell civilities of the rustics, and directed our steps to the vicarage. It was small, with a thatched

roof. The front was entirely covered with woodbine and honeysuckle, which strongly scented the circumambient air. A grove of ancient oaks, that surrounded the house, cast a solemn shade over, and preserved the verdure of the adjacent lawn, through the midst of which ran a small brook, that gently murmured as it flowed. This, together with the bleating of the sheep, the lowing of the herds, the village murmurs, and the distant barkings of the trusty curs, who were now entering on their office as guardians of the hamlet, formed a concert, at least equal to that in Tottenham-court-road. On entering the wicket, we were met by a little gil of six years old. Her dress was simple, but elegant; and her appearance such as spoke her destined for a higher sphere. As soon as she had informed her grandfather that supper was ready, she dropped a courtesy, and retired. I delayed not a moment to congratulate the good old man on possessing so great a treasure. He replied, but with a sigh; and we entered the house, where every thing was distinguished by an air of elegant simplicity that surprised me. On our entrance, he introduced me to his wife; a woman turned of forty, who still possessed great remains of beauty, and had much the appearance of a woman of fashion. She received

me with easy politeness, and regretted that she had it not in her power to entertain me better. I requested her not to distress me with unnecessary apologies, and we sat down to supper. The little angel, who welcomed us at the door, now seating herself opposite to me, offered me an opportunity of contemplating one of the finest faces I ever beheld. My worthy host, observing how much I was struck with her appearance, directed my attention to a picture which hung over the mantle. It was a striking likeness of my little neighbour, only on a larger scale. "That, sir (said he), is Harriet's mother. Do you not think there is a vast resemblance?" To this I assented; when the old man put up a prayer to Heaven, that she might resemble her mother in every thing but her unhappy fate. He then started another topic of conversation, without gratifying the curiosity he had excited concerning the fate of Harriet's mother, for whom I had already felt myself much interested.—Her tale, however, shall be the subject of a future paper.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 32, October 20, 1787

No. CXX.

> ...rtal pleasure, what art thou in truth!
> The torrent's smoothness ere it dash below!
>
> CAMPBELL.

(*Continuation of the Vicar's Tale.*)

SUPPER being removed, after chatting some time, my worthy host conducted me to my bed-chamber, which was on the ground floor, and lined with jasmine, that was conducted in at the windows. After wishing me good night, he retired, leaving me to rest. The beauty of the scenery, however, and my usual propensity to walk by moon-light, induced me to leave my fragrant cell. When I sallied forth, the moon was darting her temperated rays through the shade that surrounded the cottage, tipping the tops of the venerable oaks with silver. After taking a turn or two on the lawn, I wandered to the spot where "the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep." It was small, and, for the most part, surrounded with yew-trees of an ancient date, beneath whose solemn shade many generations had mouldered into dust. No sooner did I enter, than my attention was caught by a pillar

of white marble placed on the summit of a small eminence, the base of which was surrounded with honeysuckles and woodbines, whilst a large willow overshadowed the pillar. As I was with attention perusing the epitaph, I was not a little alarmed by the approach of a figure clothed in a long robe. The apparition continued advancing towards me with a slow step, and its eyes fixed on the ground, which prevented it observing me till we were within reach of each other.—Great was my wonder at recognising my worthy host in this situation; nor was his astonishment less at finding his guest thus courting the appearance of goblins and fairies. After each had expressed the surprise he felt, I proceeded to inquire whose dust was there enshrined. To my question he returned answer :—"There, sir, sleeps Harriet's mother, an innocent, but unfortunate woman. Pardon, me, sir (said he), if, for a moment, I indulge my sorrow, and bedew my Harriet's grave with tears,—a tribute that I often pay her much-loved memory, when the rest of the world is lost in sleep."—Here he paused, and seemed much agitated.—At length he requested my permission to defer the recital of Harriet's woes till the next day, as he found himself unequal to the task of proceeding in the painful detail. To this proposal I readily ac-

ceded, and we returned home. I retired to my room, but every attempt to procure sleep proved ineffectual. Harriet had so wholly occupied my thoughts, that no moment of the night was suffered to pass unnoticed. At length, " when " soared the warbling lark on high," I left my couch, and rejoined my worthy landlord, who was busily employed in the arrangement of his garden. Though I declined mentioning the subject of our last night's adventure, yet he saw the marks of anxious expectation in my countenance, and proceeded to gratify the curiosity he had inspired.—" It will be necessary (said he), before I proceed to relate the woes that befel my daughter, to give a short sketch of my own life.—Six and twenty years ago, Mrs. —— came hither for the benefit of her health, the air being recommended as highly salubrious. On her arrival she gave out that she was the daughter of a clergyman who was lately dead, and had left her in narrow circumstances. I thought it my duty to visit her, and offer her any little attention in my power. She received me with politeness, and expressed a wish to cultivate my acquaintance. I continued to repeat my visits for some time without suspecting that there was any thing particular in her history, till, one morning, I found her in tears, reading a

letter she had just received. On my entrance she gave it to me; it contained a notification from Lord B——'s agent, that her usual remittance would no longer be continued. On opening this letter, I was led to suppose that her connection with Lord B—— was not of the most honourable nature. But all my suspicions vanished on her producing several letters from Lord B—— to her mother, with whom he had long been connected. From these letters, I learned, that Mrs. —— was the daughter of Lord B—— by Miss M——, sister to a Scotch baronet, whom he had seduced and supported during the remainder of her life. But he had, it seems, determined to withdraw his protection from the fruit of their connection. Mrs. —— declared she knew not what step to take, as her finances were nearly exhausted. I endeavoured to comfort her, assuring her that she should command every assistance in my power. On hearing this, she seemed a little satisfied, and became more composed. After sitting with her some time, I returned home, to consider in what manner I might most easily afford protection to the young orphan whose whole dependance was on my support. If I took her home to live with me, as I was unmarried, it would give offence to my parishioners: my income was too

confined to admit of my affording her a separate establishment. Thus circumstanced, I determined to offer her my hand. You will, no doubt, say, it was rather an imprudent step for a man who had seen his fortieth year to connect himself with youth and beauty: but, as my brother was then living, it was impossible for me to render her the least assistance on any other plan. She received my proposal with grateful surprise, and accepted it without hesitation. In a few days we were married, and have now lived together six and twenty years in a state, the felicity of which has never been interrupted by those discordant jars which are so frequently the concomitants of matrimony: though, alas! our peace has received a mortal wound from one, the bare mention of whose name fills me with horror! but not to digress: before the return of that day which saw me blessed with the hand of Emily, my happiness received an important addition, by the birth of a daughter, who inherited all her mother's charms. It is superfluous to add, that she was equally the idol of both her parents; and as she was the only fruit of our marriage, she became every day a greater favourite. My wife had received such an education as rendered her fully capable of accomplishing her daughter in a manner far superior

to any thing her situation required, or perhaps could justify. To this agreeable employment, however, she devoted her whole time; and when Harriet had reached her eighteenth year, she was in every respect a highly accomplished woman; she was become what that picture represents her. With an amiable temper and gentle manners, she was the idol of the village. Hitherto she had experienced a state of felicity unknown in the more exalted stations of life—unconscious, alas! of the ills that awaited her future years.

"It is with reluctance I proceed in the melancholy narrative.—One evening, as a young man, attended by a servant, was passing through the village, his horse startled, and threw him. Happening to be on the spot at the time, I offered every assistance in my power, and conveying him to my cottage, dispatched his servant in quest of a surgeon, who declared our patient was not in any danger, but recommended it to him to delay his departure for a day or two. His health, however, or, rather, his love, did not admit of his travelling for near a fortnight; during which time he established his interest with Harriet by the most pleasing and unremitting attention to her slightest wishes.—When about to depart, he requested leave to repeat

his visit on his return from his intended tour, dropping, at the same time, some distant hints of his affection for Harriet, to whom he was by no means indifferent.

"Mr. H—— (for so our guest was named) informed us, previous to his departure, that he had a small independent fortune; but that from a distant relation he had considerable expectations. After bidding an affectionate adieu to Harriet, he set out on his intended tour, which lasted for a month."—The effects produced by his absence must, however, be reserved for another paper.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 37, Nov. 24, 1787.

No. CXXI.

Thou art come
Hither to rob a father of that wealth
That solely lengthens his now drooping years,
His virtuous daughter.

ROBERT TAILOR.

(Conclusion of the Vicar's Tale.)

"DURING the time of Mr. H——'s absence, Harriet appeared pensive, and I observed, with pain, that he had made no slight impression on her heart. At length Mr. H—— returned, and Harriet's reception of him left us no room to doubt her attachment. During his second visit he was very assiduous to secure the favour of all the family: with Harriet he easily succeeded; nor were Mrs. T—— or myself disposed to dislike him. His manners were elegant, and his wit lively. At length he obtained from Harriet the promise of her hand, provided her parents should not object. Hitherto I had never been induced to make inquiries concerning his circumstances and character. Now, however, by his direction, I applied to a Mr. E—ns, a clergyman of his acquaintance. This gentleman, now in an exalted station in the church, then chaplain to Lord C——, informed

me that Mr. H—— was, in every respect, a desirable match for my daughter, and that whenever his cousin should die, he would be enabled to maintain her in affluence and splendour:—he added that his character was unexceptionable. Little suspecting the villanous part Mr. E—ns was acting, I readily consented to the proposed union, and performed the ceremony myself. Mr. H—— requested that their marriage might be kept a secret, till the birth of a son and heir. This proposal rather alarmed me, but it was too late to retreat; and, knowing no one in the great world, it was impossible for me, previous to the marriage, to procure any account of Mr. H——, but such as his friend communicated to me. Thus circumstanced, I could only consent; and as Harriet readily adopted every proposal that came from one she so tenderly loved, the matter was finally agreed on. After staying a few days, he set off for London, but soon returned, and passed the whole winter with us; and in the spring, Harriet was delivered of that little girl you so much admire. I now pressed him to acknowledge my daughter as his wife. To this he answered, that had she brought him a son, he would readily have complied with my request; but that his cousin was so great an oddity, that he could

not bear the idea (to use his own expression) 'of having his fortune lavished in a milliner's shop:' 'but,' added he, 'if you insist upon it, I will now risk the loss of all his fortune, and introduce my Harriet to his presence.' Harriet, however, again interfered, and desired that Mr. H—— might not be forced into measures that might, in the end, prove destructive of his future prospect, and induce him to regret the day he ever saw her. These arguments prevailed, and Mr. H—— was suffered to continue as a member of the family, without any farther notice taken of the subject. In this manner had three years elapsed undistinguished by any remarkable event, Mr. H—— generally passing half the year with us, and the remainder in London, attending, as he said, on his cousin; when one day, as he was sitting with us at dinner, a chaise and four drove up to the house. The servants inquired for Mr. H——, and on hearing he was there, opened the carriage door. A gentleman, dressed like an officer, jumped out, followed by a lady in a travelling dress;—they rushed immediately into the room. Their appearance amazed us; but Mr. H—— betrayed the most visible marks of consternation. The lady appeared to be about thirty. She was a woman by no means destitute of personal

charms. The moment she entered the room, she seized upon Harriet, and, loading her with every horrible epithet, proceeded to indulge her passion by striking her innocent rival. On seeing this, an old servant of mine seized the lady, and forcibly turned her out of the house; then fastened the door. It was not till now that we perceived the absence of Mr. H——, who had, it seems, retired with the lady's companion. Whilst we were still lost in amazement at the transaction we had just witnessed, we were alarmed to the highest pitch by the report of a pistol. Harriet instantly fainted. Whilst Mrs. T—— was recovering her, I flew to the spot from whence the sound proceeded, and there found Mr. H—— weltering in his blood, with a pistol lying by him. I approached, and found him still sensible. He informed me, that the lady's brother and he had fought, and that, seeing him fall, they had both escaped as fast as possible. I instantly procured assistance and conveyed him to the house, where he was put to bed, and a surgeon was sent for. In the mean time Harriet had several fits, and we were very apprehensive that the hour of her fate was approaching. On the arrival of the surgeon, he declared the wound Mr. H—— had received would probably prove mortal, and recommend-

ed the arrangement of his affairs. Mr. H—— received the news with great agony, and desired that I might be left alone with him. No sooner was this request granted, than he addressed me in the following terms: "In me, sir, behold the most unfortunate, and, alas! the most guilty of men. The lady whose ill-timed visit has lost me my life, is, I tremble to pronounce the word,—my wife." Seeing me pale with horror, he proceeded. "No wonder, sir, that you should behold with horror one who has repaid unbounded hospitality by unequalled villany. The bare remembrance of my own guilt distracts me. The awful hour is now fast approaching, when I must receive my final doom from that heaven whose laws I have so daringly violated. To redress the injuries I have committed, is, alas! impossible. My death will be an atonement by no means sufficient. I cannot, however, leave this world till you shall be informed, that ten thousand pounds, the whole of my property that is at my disposal, has long ago been transferred by me into the hands of trustees, for the benefit of my much-injured Harriet, and her unhappy infant. In my own defence, I have nothing to urge. Suffer me only to remark, that my misfortune arose from the avarice of my father, who forced me

into a marriage with the woman you lately saw, and whose brother has been the instrument in the hand of Providence to inflict on me the doom I so much merited. If possible, conceal from Harriet that I was married. Picture, for her sake, an innocent deception, and tell her that I was only engaged to that lady. This will contribute to promote her repose, and the deception may possibly plead the merit of prolonging a life so dear to you; for the elevated mind of my Harriet would never survive the fatal discovery of my villany. But, oh! when my unhappy child shall ask the fate of him who gave her being, in pity draw a veil over that guilt, which can scarcely hope to obtain the pardon of heaven." There he ceased, and, uttering a short prayer, expired. Happily for Harriet, she continued in a state of insensibility for three days; during which time I had the body removed to a neighbouring house, there to wait for interment. Having addressed a letter to Mr. H——'s agent in town, he sent orders for the body to be removed to the family burying place, where it was accordingly interred. Harriet recovered by slow degrees from the state of happy insensibility, into which the death of Mr. H—— had plunged her. Her grief became silent and settled. Groans and

exclamations now gave way to sighs, and the bitter tears of desponding grief. She seldom or never spoke—but would cry for hours together over her hapless infant, then call on the shadow of her departed Henry, little suspecting the irreparable injury he had done her. It was with infinite anxiety I beheld the decline of Harriet's health. Prone as we ever are to hope what we ardently desire, I now despaired of her recovery. While, in a state of hopeless inactivity, I was doomed to witness the lingering death of my beloved Harriet, I received a visit from an old friend. On his arrival, I allotted him the apartment formerly inhabited by Mr. H—— and Harriet. About midnight he was awakened by some one entering the apartment. On removing the curtain, he discovered, by the light of the moon, my adored Harriet in a white dress. Her eyes were open, but had a vacant look that plainly proved she was not awake. She advanced with a slow step; then seating herself at the foot of the bed, remained there an hour, weeping bitterly the whole time, but without uttering a word. My friend, fearful of the consequences, forbore to awake her, and she retired with the same deliberate step she had entered. This intelligence alarmed me excessively. On the next night she was watched,

and the same scene was repeated, with this difference, that, after quitting the fatal apartment, she went to the room where her daughter usually slept, and, laying herself down on the bed, wept over the child for some time; then returned to her apartment. The next morning we waited with anxiety for her appearance at breakfast; but, alas!"—Here a flood of tears afforded to my friend that relief which he so much needed; and we returned to the house. After passing some days with this worthy couple, I proceeded on my tour, quitting with reluctance the abode of sorrow and resignation. Those whom the perusal of this tale may interest, will, if ever they visit the banks of the Alna, find that the author has copied his characters from nature.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 38, Dec. 1, 1787.

No. CXXII.

Accipe nunc, victus tenuis quæ quantaque secum
Adferat.

HORAT.

Now mark what blessings flow
From temperate meals.

FRANCIS.

Sir,

THE advantages which arise, from regulating the several appetites, to the health of the body, have been too repeatedly insisted upon to require any farther animadversion. My present remarks shall be confined to temperance of diet in particular, and to the advantages which occur from it to the health of the mind.

How far the intellectual faculties are connected with the animal economy, is a disquisition which rather belongs to the natural philopher than to the moralist. The experience of every individual must convince him of their alliance, so far as that the mind and body sympathise in all the modifications of pleasure or of pain.

One would imagine, that the stoical apathy was founded on a notion of the independence of the mind on the body. According to this

philosophy, the mind may remain, as it were, an unconcerned spectator, while the body undergoes the most excruciating torments. But the moderns, however disposed to be stoics, cannot help being afflicted by a fit of the gout or stone.

If the mind suffers with the body in violence of pain, and acuteness of disease, it is usually found to recover its wonted strength, when the body is restored to health and vigour.

But there is some kind of sympathy, in which the mind continues to suffer even after the body is relieved. When the listless languor, and the nauseous satiety of recent excess, is gradually worn off, the mind still continues for a while to feel a burden which no efforts can remove; and to be surrounded with a cloud which time only can dissipate.

Didactic authors, who have undertaken to prescribe rules for the student in the pursuit of knowledge, frequently insist on a regularity and abstinence in the articles of food and wine. It is indeed a fruitless labour to aim at increasing the stock of ideas, and improving the powers of penetration, without a strict observance of the laws of temperance.

It has been remarked, that the founders of colleges, who spared no expense in the embel-

lishment of the buildings, have not been so liberal in providing food for the inhabitants. Perhaps these no less judicious than pious patrons of learning were sensible of the utility of frequent fasting and temperate meals, in promoting literary, as well as moral and religious improvement. Nature's wants they took care to satisfy, and nature wants but little.

Horace, in a satire in which he professedly enumerates the advantages of temperance, observes, with a beautiful energy of expression, "That the body, overcharged with the excesses of yesterday, weighs down the mind together with itself, and fixes to the earth that particle of the divine spirit."

That Aurora is a friend to the muses, is almost proverbial, and, like all those aphorisms which are founded on experience, is a just remark; but if an adequate cause were to be assigned for this effect, I know not whether it might not justly be attributed as much to fasting, as to the refreshment of sleep. The emptiness of the stomach it is which tends to give to the understanding acuteness, to the imagination vigour, and to the memory retention.

It is well known, that the principal meal of the ancients was the supper; and it has been matter of surprise, that they, whose wisdom was

so generally conspicuous in the several institutions of common life, should adopt a practice which is universally esteemed injurious to health. It is, however, not unreasonable to suppose, that they were unwilling to clog their intellects by satisfying the cravings of hunger in the day time, the season of business and deliberation, and chose rather to indulge themselves in the hour of natural festivity, when no care remained but to retire from the banquet to the pillow.

Too much, indeed, cannot be said in praise of temperance.

I am, sir,

Yours, &c.

ANTI-EPICURUS.

THE NEW SPECTATOR, No. 14, May 4, 1784.

The following singular production has already been published. There is something so extremely poetical in it, however, and it is so little known, that I cannot but wish to see it preserved.

Vale, longum vale!

VIRGIL.

ONCE more, my lute, and then be still!
Since after this another end
Its destin'd measure must fulfil,
Ere to those blissful bowers we tend.—
Once more, my lute, and then be still!

Once more, my lute, and then be still!
To warn the world to count their days,
Lest they their sacred leisure spill,
In evil works, and evil ways.—
And now, my lute, thou mayst be still!

Once more, my harp, and then be still!
To which I sang of Israel's wrongs,
When the proud foe who wrought their ill
Demanded one of Zion's songs.—
Once more, my harp, and then be still!

Once more, my harp, and then be still!
To warn the world how they transgress
Against the Lord of Zion hill,
Who loves his chosen flock to bless.—
And now my harp, thou mayst be still!

Once more, my pipe, and then be still!
Attuned to dead Timeus' praise,
Who taught his bard, with heavenly skill,
Sweet Lucon's monument to raise.—
Once more, my pipe, and then be still!

Once more, my pipe, and then be still!
To warn the world how they affect
Things all too high, with stubborn will,
And stable joy for man expect.—
And now, my pipe, thou may'st be still!

My pipe, my lute, my lyre, be still!
Yet silent shall not be your fate!
When to oblivion's dusky rill
Retire the little and the great,
My harp shall sound when I am still!

THE NEW SPECTATOR, No. 14.

PARABLE AGAINST PERSECUTION.

THE late Lord Kaimes tells us, that the following Parable against Persecution, was communicated to him by Dr. Franklin, of Philadelphia. The historical style of the Old Testament, his lordship observes, is here finely imitated; and the moral must strike every one who is not sunk in stupidity and superstition.

1. And it came to pass after these things, that Abraham sat in the door of his tent, about the going down of the sun.

2. And behold a man, bent with age, coming from the way of the wilderness, leaning on a staff.

3. And Abraham arose and met him, and said unto him, Turn in, I pray thee, and wash thy feet, and tarry all night; and thou shalt arise early in the morning, and go on thy way.

4. And the man said, nay; for I will abide under this tree.

5. But Abraham pressed him greatly. So he turned and went into the tent; and Abraham baked unleavened bread, and they did eat.

6. And when Abraham saw that the man blessed not God, he said unto him, wherefore dost thou not worship the most high God, creator of heaven and earth?

7. And the man answered and said, I do not worship thy God, neither do I call upon his name: for I have made to myself a God, which abideth always in my house, and provideth me with all things.

8. And Abraham's zeal was kindled against the man, and he arose, and fell upon him, and drove him forth with blows into the wilderness.

9. And God called unto Abraham, saying, Abraham, where is the stranger?

10. And Abraham answered and said, Lord, he would not worship thee, neither would he call upon thy name; therefore have I driven him out from before my face into the wilderness.

11. And God said, Have I borne with him these hundred and ninety and eight years, and nourished him, and clothed him, notwithstanding his rebellion against me, and couldst not thou, who art thyself a sinner, bear with him one night?

12. And Abraham said, Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot against his servant: lo, I have sinned; forgive me, I pray thee.

13. And Abraham arose and went forth into the wilderness, and diligently sought for the man, and found him, and returned with him to

the tent; and when he had entreated him kindly, he sent him away on the morrow with gifts.

14. And God spake again unto Abraham, saying, For this thy sin, shall thy seed be afflicted four hundred years in a strange land.

15. But for thy repentance will I deliver them; and they shall come forth with power, and with gladness of heart, and with much substance.

THE NEW SPECTATOR, No. 20, June 15, 1784.

No. CXXIII.

> Incorrupta fides, nudaque veritas,
> Quando ullum inveniet parem?
> Multus ille bonis flebilis occidit.
>
> HORAT.

> Dear to each muse, to every virtue dear,
> Where shall we match the faith that warm'd his breast?
> Where his integrity, his truth sincere?
> What good man wept not as he sunk to rest?

WHEN a friend told Johnson that he was much blamed for having unveiled the weakness of Pope, "Sir," said he, "if one man undertake to write the life of another, he undertakes to exhibit his true and real character: but this can be done only by a faithful and accurate delineation of the particulars which discriminate that character."

The biographers of this great man seem conscientiously to have followed the rule thus laid down by him, and have very fairly communicated all they knew, whether to his advantage or otherwise. Much concern, disquietude, and offence, have been occasioned by their conduct in the minds of many, who apprehend, that the cause in which he stood forth will suffer by the

infirmities of the advocate being thus exposed to the prying and malignant eye of the world.

But did these persons then ever suppose, or did they imagine that the world ever supposed, Dr. Johnson to have been a perfect character? Alas, no: we all know how that matter stands, if we ever look into our own hearts, and duly watch the current of our own thoughts, words, and actions. Johnson was honest, and kept a faithful diary of these, which is before the public. Let any man do the same for a fortnight, and publish it: and if, after that, he should find himself so disposed, let him "cast a stone." At that hour when the failings of all shall be made manifest, the attention of each individual will be confined to his own.

It is not merely the name of Johnson that is to do service to any cause. It is his genius, his learning, his good sense, the strength of his reasonings, and the happiness of his illustrations. These all are precisely what they were: once good, and always good. His arguments in favour of self-denial do not lose their force, because he fasted; nor those in favour of devotion, because he said his prayers. Grant his failings were, if possible, still greater than these: will a man refuse to be guided by the sound opinion of a counsel, or resist the salutary prescription of a

physician, because they who give them are not without their faults? A man may do so; but he will never be accounted a wise man for doing it.

Johnson, it is said, was superstitious. But who shall exactly ascertain to us what superstition is? The Romanist is charged with it by the Church-of-England man; the Churchman by the Presbyterian; the Presbyterian by the Independent; all by the Deist, and the Deist by the Atheist. With some, it is superstition to pray; with others, to receive the sacrament; with others, to believe in revelation; with others, to believe in God. In some minds it springs from the most amiable disposition in the world—"a pious awe, and fear to have offended," a wish rather to do too much, than too little. Such a disposition one loves and wishes always to find in a friend; and it cannot be disagreeable in the sight of him who made us. It argues a sensibility of heart, a tenderness of conscience, and the fear of God. Let him, who finds it not in himself, beware lest, in flying from superstition, he fall into irreligion and profaneness.

That persons of eminent talents and attainments in literature have been often complained of as dogmatical, boisterous, and inattentive to the rules of good breeding, is well known. But let us not expect every thing from every

man. There was no occasion that Johnson should teach us to dance, to make bows, or turn compliments. He could teach us better things. To reject wisdom because the person of him who communicates it is uncouth, and his manners are inelegant—what is it, but to throw away a pine-apple, and assign for a reason the roughness of its coat? Who quarrels with a botanist, for not being an astronomer; or with a moralist, for not being a mathematician? As it is said in concerns of a much higher nature, "every man hath his gift, one after this manner, and another after that." It is our business to profit by all, and to learn of each that in which each is best qualified to instruct us.

That Johnson was generous and charitable, none can deny; but he was not always judicious in the selection of his objects: distress was a sufficient recommendation, and he did not scrutinise into the failings of the distressed. May it be always my lot to have such a benefactor! Some are so nice in a scrutiny of this kind, that they can never find any proper objects of their benevolence, and are necessitated to save their money. It should doubtless be distributed in the best manner we are able to distribute it; but what would become of us all, if he, on whose bounty all depend, should

be "extreme to mark that which is done amiss?"

It is hard to judge any man, without a due consideration of all circumstances. Here were stupendous abilities, and suitable attainments; but, then, here were hereditary disorders of body and mind reciprocally aggravating each other; a scrophulous frame, and a melancholy temper: here was a life, the greater part of which passed in making provision for the day, under the pressure of poverty and sickness, sorrow and anguish. So far to gain the ascendant over these, as to do what Johnson did, required very great strength of mind indeed. Who can say, that, in a like situation, he should long have possessed, or been able to exert it?

From the mixture of power and weakness in the composition of this wonderful man, the scholar should learn humility. It was designed to correct that pride which great parts and great learning are apt to produce in their possessor. In him it had the desired effect. For though consciousness of superiority might sometimes induce him to carry it high with man (and even this was much abated in the latter part of life), his devotions have shewn to the whole world, how humbly he walked at all times with his God.

His example may likewise encourage those of

timid and gloomy dispositions not to despond, when they reflect, that the vigour of such an intellect could not preserve its possessor from the depredations of melancholy. They will cease to be surprised and alarmed at the degree of their own sufferings: they will resolve to bear, with patience and resignation, the malady to which they find a Johnson subject, as well as themselves: and if they want words, in which to ask relief from him who alone can give it, the God of mercy, and Father of all comfort, language affords no finer than those in which his prayers are conceived. Child of sorrow, whoever thou art, use them; and be thankful, that the man existed by whose means thou hast them to use.

His eminence and his fame must, of course, have excited envy and malice: but let envy and malice look at his infirmities and his charities, and they will quickly melt into pity and love.

That he should not be conscious of the abilities with which Providence had blessed him, was impossible. He felt his own powers, he felt what he was capable of having performed; and he saw how little, comparatively speaking, he had performed. Hence his apprehensions on the near prospect of the account to be made, viewed through the medium of constitutional

and morbid melancholy, which often excluded from his sight the bright beams of divine mercy. May those beams ever shine upon us! But let them not cause us to forget, that talents have been bestowed, of which an account must be rendered! and that the fate of the "unprofitable servant," may justly beget apprehensions in the stoutest mind. The indolent man, who is without such apprehensions, has never yet considered the subject as he ought. For one person who fears death too much, there are a thousand who do not fear it enough, nor have thought in earnest about it. Let us only put in practice the duty of self-examination; let us inquire into the success we have experienced in our war against the passions, or even against undue indulgence of the common appetites, eating, drinking, and sleeping: we shall soon perceive how much more easy it is to form resolutions, than to execute them; and shall no longer find occasion, perhaps, to wonder at the weakness of Johnson.

On the whole—In the memoirs of him that have been published, there are so many witty sayings, and so many wise ones, by which the world, if it so please, may be at once entertained and improved, that I do not regret their publication. In this, as in all other instances, we

are to adopt the good and reject the evil. The little stories of his oddities and his infirmities in common life will, after a while, be overlooked and forgotten; but his writings will live for ever, still more and more studied and admired, while Britons shall continue to be characterised by a love of elegance and sublimity, of good sense and virtue. The sincerity of his repentance, the steadfastness of his faith, and the fervour of his charity, forbid us to doubt, that his sun set in clouds, to rise without them: and of this let us always be mindful, that every one who is made better by his books, will add a wreath to his crown.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 13, June 9, 1787.

A character more candid and judicious than this which the late amiable bishop of Norwich has given of Dr. Johnson, cannot well be drawn. Its epitome may be found in the following faithfully descriptive lines of Mr. Cumberland:

ON SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Herculean strength and a Stentorian voice,
Of wit a fund, of words a countless choice:
In learning rather various than profound,
In truth intrepid, in religion sound:
A trembling form and a distorted sight,
But firm in judgment, and in genius bright;
In controversy seldom known to spare,
But humble as the publican in prayer;
To more than merited his kindness, kind,
And, though in manners harsh, of friendly mind;
Deep ting'd with melancholy's blackest shade,
And, though prepar'd to die, of death afraid.
Such Johnson was; of him, with justice, vain,
When will this nation see his like again?

No. CXXIV.

Gaudetque viam fecisse ruinâ.

LUCAN.

And he rejoiced to have accomplished his purposes by slaughter.

With a view, no doubt, of more deeply interesting our attention, it seems the practice of modern tragedy-writers to aim at exciting terror by a general yet indiscriminate recourse to the bowl and dagger; whilst, after exhausting the whole armoury of the property-room, the fifth act is frequently accelerated from the mere want of surviving personages to support the play. The modern hero of the drama seems as it were professionally to consider killing as no murder; the rout of armies, the capture of thousands, and the downfall of empires, forms the nauseous yet perpetual chit-chat of the narrative. However gross may be the deficiencies of plot, character, style, and language, incident pregnant with devastation and bloodshed is deemed a receipt in full for every excellence; and in proportion as the ordinary standard of human actions is exceeded, the nearer, in the opinion of the author, the piece approaches to

perfection. Such a conduct, however, betrays the greatest poverty of expedient, and, not unfrequently, defeats its own end, by exciting disgust instead of approbation. Nature deals in no such hyperboles: to the credit of herself, and the comfort of her creation, she as rarely shews in the moral world, a Nero, a Borgia, a Cromwell, or a Catiline, as she does in the natural, a comet or a hurricane, an earthquake or an inundation. Whoever has cursorily turned over the dramatic works of Lee and Dryden, will acknowledge the justness of this charge.

With uniform and unexampled characters either of vice or virtue in the extreme, the aggregate of mankind are little affected; as they cannot come under their observation in real life, they have few claims to their notice, and none to their belief, in fictitious representations. Mixed characters alone come home to the minds of the multitude. The angelic quality of a Grandison, or a Harlowe, are reflected but by the hearts of a few solitary individuals, whilst those of Jones finds a never-failing mirrour in the greater part of mankind. At all events, if it is possible to avoid verging to one extreme or the other, the side of virtue, it is hoped, is the most probable, and therefore the most proper of the two; and wherever we are tempted by a

story peculiarly adapted to the tragic muse (carrying with it, at the same time, a sufficiency of the terrible), it is the business of the poet to be most cautious in the selection, and to deal out death and destruction as reluctantly and as seldom as the nature of the incidents will admit; for I cannot help concurring with Jonathan Wild in opinion, that mischief is much too precious a commodity to be squandered.

The judiciously blending the lights and shades of a character, so as to make the one necessarily result from, and fall into the other, constitutes one of the most difficult branches of the art; and, in the works of common writers, it is in vain we look for an effect of the kind. To delineate, with exactness, the temporary lapse of the good from virtue to vice, or those peculiar situations in which the wicked man falters in his career, and blushes to find himself "staggering upon virtue," demands the hand of a master. A character of uninterrupted detestation can scarcely exist; and when it is obtruded upon us, we have a right to question the abilities of him who drew it. The Satan of Milton, though with a heart distended with pride, and rejoicing in disobedience, when marshalling his troops (all of whom had forfeited heaven in his cause) for the express purpose of confronting the Almighty,

betrays emotions almost incompatible with his nature. They are singularly affecting:—

> Cruel his eye, but cast
> Signs of remorse and passion to behold
> The fellows of his crimes, the followers rather,
> (Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd
> For ever now to have their lot in pain;
> Millions of spirits, for his faults, amerc'd
> Of Heav'n, and from eternal splendours flung
> For his revolt ———

Mark the effect:

> ——— He now prepar'd
> To speak ———
> Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
> Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth. ——
>
> Book I. v. 604, &c.

Nor has Virgil suffered the unnatural and abandoned Mezentius, equally the contemner of the gods and the enemy of man, to leave us without exciting some pity, however undeserved. The grief with which he hears the death of his amiable son Lausus announced, and the eagerness with which he instantly hastens to revenge it, the magnanimity he discovers in his last words in reply to the taunts of Æneas, afford a fine relief to that horror and detestation which the former part of his character had previously

excited: the whole is a master-piece in its kind.*

In the Medea of Euripides, one of the first performances antiquity has left us, it is the aim of the poet throughout to make Medea an object of commiseration; and, to this end, he has made a tender and unremitted solicitude for the fate of her children the leading feature of her character: and on comparing the provocation on the one side with the revenge on the other, we shall find them by no means disproportioned. High-born, impatient, and ardent in her attachment, with a sensibility tremblingly-alive to feel her wrongs, and a spirit, to the utmost, to revenge them, she is still a tender mother, though no longer a fond wife, and, in every respect, perfectly human. For Jason she had forsaken and betrayed her father and her country, and killed her brother Absyrtus. Through his means she had been insulted by Creon, and banished his kingdom; Creon, the very man whose daughter Creusa had usurped her bed, and alienated the affections of her husband. Yet every writer who has employed himself on this subject since the Greek bard, seems widely to have mistaken, or wilfully to have departed from, what should

* See from line 833 to the conclusion of the 10th Æneid.

have been their model. Seneca, with some few slight exceptions, has divested her of every claim to pity; Corneille has done the same; and Glover, a poet of our own, has left the blunder as he found it. Whoever is desirous of being made acquainted with some of the most poignant struggles between the desire of revenge and maternal affection, is more particularly referred to this play.*

It may not be amiss to conclude these remarks with a few extracts from a most excellent modern performance, where the author has committed an error (of which he was probably sensible at the time), in order to avoid the exceeding, what he seems to have considered, the regular boundaries of human depravity.

In the last scene of the Revenge, when the dreadful unravelment of the plot takes place through the immediate agency of Zanga himself, the following circumstances are thus forcibly unfolded:

Thy wife is guiltless, that's one transport to me;
And I, I let thee know it, that's another:
I urg'd Don Carlos to resign his mistress,
I forg'd the letter, I dispos'd the picture;
I hated, I despis'd, and I destroy.

By these aggravations of malevolence, the de-

* See Medea, 1021, 1069, 1214, &c. &c.

testation of the audience is worked up to the highest possible pitch; in the subsequent part of the scene, Alonzo is racked with a still farther discovery of the reasons that incited Zanga to revenge, from Zanga himself: in an agony of despair, he stabs himself, and dies: and the poet concludes the piece with endeavouring to draw a shade over the character of the Moor before he leaves him to the mercy of the spectator; and, by one speech, aims at an atonement for him in opposition to the detestation and disgust he had previously so successfully excited. Zanga approaches the body, and thus speaks:

Is this Alonzo? where's his haughty mien?
Is this the hand which smote me? Heavens! how pale!
And art thou dead? So is my enmity,
I war not with the dust: the great, the proud,
The conqueror of Afric was my foe.
A lion preys not upon carcasses.
This was the only method to subdue me;
Terror and doubt fall on me; all thy good
Now blazes; all thy guilt is in the grave.
Never had man such funeral applause;
If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great.
O vengeance! I have follow'd thee too far;
And to receive me hell blows all her fires.—

Zanga might here with propriety retort upon Young the very words which were put into his mouth in addressing Alonzo:

Christian, thou mi tak'st my character.

For these symptoms of repentance and regret which he here discovers in acknowledging his having gone too great lengths in his pursuit of revenge, and that he had followed vengeance too far, are totally out of place, and unnatural: they are against the tenets of that religion which he is supposed to profess, and the practice and example of his country, which consider a contrary conduct as eminently meritorious.

The plain rule of Horace should, certainly, to have completed the piece, have been strictly adhered to:

——— Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto processerit, aut sibi constet.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 16, June 30, 1787.

No. CXXV.

Est natura hominum novitatis avida.

It is the nature of mankind to be desirous of novelty.

That with respect of news, as well as of liquors, man is a thirsty soul, we are taught in the words of my motto, at the very first entrance on our elementary studies. Curiosity is the appetite of the mind. It must be satisfied, or we perish.

Among the improvements, therefore, of modern times, there is none on which I find more reason to congratulate my countrymen, than the increase of knowledge by the multiplication of newspapers.

With what a mixture of horror and commiseration do we now look back to that period in our history, when, as it is said, a written letter came down once a week to the coffee house, where a proper person with a clear and strong voice, was pitched upon to read it aloud to the company assembled upon the occasion! How earnestly did they listen! How greedily did they suck down every drop of intelligence that fell within their reach! Happy the man who

carried off but half a sentence! It was his employment, for the rest of the evening, to imagine what the other half might have been. In days like these, there was, indeed, (if we may use the expression) "a famine in the land;" and one wonders how people contrived to keep body and soul together.

The provision at present made for us is ample. There are morning papers for breakfast; there are evening papers for supper—I beg pardon—I mean dinner; and lest, during the interval, wind should get into the stomach, there is, I believe,—I know there was—a paper published by way of luncheon, about noon. That fanaticism may not overwhelm us, and that profane learning may be duly mingled with sacred, there is also a Sunday Gazette; which removes one objection formerly urged, and surely not without reason, against the observation of the day.

Some have complained, that to read all the newspapers, and compare them accurately together, as it is necessary to do before a right judgment can be formed of the state of things in general, is grown to be a very laborious task, which, whoever performs properly can do nothing else. And why should he? Perhaps, he has nothing else to do; perhaps, if he had not

this to do, he would be in mischief. The complaint springs from a criminal indolence, the child of peace and wealth. No man knows what may be done within the compass of a day till he tries. Fortune favours the brave. Let him buckle to the work, and despair of nothing. The more difficulty the more honour. The Athenians, we are told, spent their time only "in hearing or telling some new thing." Would he wish to spend his time better than the Athenians did?

It has been thought, that tradesmen and artificers may spend too much of their time in this employment, to the neglect of their own respective occupations. But this can be thought only by such as have not considered, that to an Englishman his country is every thing. Self is swallowed up, as it ought to be, in patriotism: or, to borrow ecclesiastical language, the constitution is his diocese; his own business can only be regarded in the light of a commendam, on which if he cast an eye now and then, as he happens to pass that way, it is abundantly sufficient.

The spirit of defamation by which a newspaper is often possessed, has now found its own remedy in the diversity of them: for though a gentleman may read, that he himself is a scoun-

drel, and his wife no better than she should be, to-day, he will be sure to read, that both of them are very good sort of people to-morrow. In the same manner, if one paper, through mistake, or design, kill his friend, there is another ready to fetch him to life; nay, if he have good luck in the order of his reading, he may be informed that his friend is alive again, before he had perused the account of his death.

The expense of advertising in so many different newspapers may, perhaps, be deemed a hardship upon authors. But, then, they have, in return, the comfort of reflecting, what benefactors they are to the revenue. Besides, how easy is it for them to balance the account, by printing with a large type, due space between the lines, and a broad margin! Great advantage may be obtained by throwing their compositions into the form of letters which may be as short as they please; and a reader of delicacy thinks, the shorter the better. A letter of six lines is a very decent letter. It may begin at the bottom of one page, and end at the top of the next, so that eight parts in ten of what the reader purchases consist of blank paper; his eye is agreeably relieved; and if the paper be good for any thing, he has, upon the whole, no bad bargain. That the vehicles of intelligence, numerous as they are, yet are not too numerous,

appears, because there is news for them all, there are purchasers for all, and advertisements for all: these last not only afford aid to government, and are pretty reading, but sometimes have an influence upon the important affairs of the world, which is not known or even suspected.

No event of latter times has more astonished mankind, than the sudden downfall of the Jesuits; and various causes have been assigned for it. I am happy, that it is in my power, by means of a correspondent at Rome, who was in the secret, to furnish my readers with the true one; an anecdote, which, I believe, has never before transpired.

It was owing, then, to an advertisement in an English newspaper, which passed over to the continent, and, by some means or other, found its way to the Vatican. I remember, perfectly well, to have read the advertisement, at the time, and to have noted it down in my adversaria, as I am wont to do when any thing strikes me in a particular manner. It ran thus:—

"John Haynes, of St. Clements, Oxford, begs leave to inform the public, that he alone possesses the true art of making leather breeches sit easy."

As the newspaper containing the advertisement came from Oxford, his holiness and their eminences immediately saw, that in these last

words was conveyed a keen though covert satire upon the loose casuistry of the sons of Loyola. A consistory was called, and Ganganelli formed his resolution. What followed, all the world knows.

I thought it but justice to my worthy friend Haynes, to mention thus much; and as, by the introduction of fustian, his trade has been long upon the decline, I would hope that every good protestant will forthwith bespeak a pair of leather breeches (and pay for them when brought home) of a man who has given such a blow to Popery, and had the address to effect what the Provincial Letters attempted in vain.

From this instance it is evident, that we ought to read all newspapers, country as well as town, on which we can lay our hands; for we know not what we may have lost by missing any one of them. This enlarges the sphere of our researches, and the imagination riots in the delicious prospect. The journals printed at the two universities must always have an especial claim to our attention.

I was seized, a few years ago, at a considerable distance from our Alma Mater, with a violent fever. James's powder ceased to be of service; the physician of the place, who had been called in, shook his head; and I began to think I should

never more behold St. Mary's spire, and Radcliffe's library. I was almost speechless, but endeavoured, from time to time, as well as I could, to articulate the word " Jackson." My attendants concluded me delirious, and heeded not what I said: till a lad, who travelled as my servant, coming accidentally into the room, exclaimed eagerly, that he would be hanged if his master did not mean the Oxford newspaper. It was fetched by express, and I made signs that it should be read. The effect was a kindly perspiration, followed by a gentle sleep, from which I awoke with my fever abated, and felt myself greatly refreshed indeed. I continued mending. On the Saturday following, " the julep, as before," was repeated; and on Monday I arose, and pursued my journey.

There is one argument in favour of a multiplicity of newspapers, which I do not remember to have met with; namely, that no man is ever satisfied with another man's reading a newspaper to him; but the moment it is laid down, he takes it up, and reads it over again. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that each should have a newspaper to himself, and so change round, till every paper shall have been read by every person.

A question has sometimes been debated, con-

cerning the best time for reading newspapers. But surely the proper answer to it is, read them the moment you can get them. For my own part, I always dry my paper upon my knees, and make shift to pick out a few articles during the operation. It has been fancied, that by reading of this kind in a morning (the season marked out for it, since Mr. Palmer's regulation of the post), the head of a young academic becomes so filled with a heterogeneous mixture of trash, that he is fit for nothing. But bona verba,—fair and softly, my good friend. Why should we not take up the matter at the other end, and say rather, his mind is so expanded by a rich variety of new ideas, that he is fit for—any thing?

I shall conclude this speculation with observing, that we have just cause to be thankful for the number of newspapers dispersed among us; since, in a little time, nothing else will be read; it being nearly agreed by all persons of the ton, that is, by all men of sense and taste, that religion is a hum, virtue a twaddle, and learning a bore.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 17, July 7, 1787.

No. CXXVI.

This folio of four pages, happy work!
What is it, but a map of busy life,
Its fluctuations, and its vast concerns.
COWPER.

When I have had the good fortune to light upon any subject which has been relished by the nice discerning palate of the public, it is my custom to try whether something more cannot be made of it: for, having entered upon business with a moderate stock only in trade, it is expedient for me to husband it well, and to throw nothing away that can be used again. Being born with an antipathy to plagiarism, I will be free to confess (as gentlemen express it in the House of Commons) that I took the hint from my landlord of the Red Lion, at Brentford; who, when some punch was called for, and there was no more fruit in the house, was overheard to say, in a gentle voice, to Mrs. Bonnyface, " Betty, ca'sn't give the old lemons t'other squeeze?"

I have demonstrated, upon a former occasion —I should hope, to the satisfaction of every impartial person in Great Britain—the manifold

advantages accruing to the community from the multiplication of newspapers among us. It has since occurred to me, that some directions might be given, as to the best method of reading a newspaper with profit and advantage. I mean, not whether it should be read longitudinally, latitudinally, or transversely, though very great additions have been made to science by experiments of this kind, but how it may be rendered productive of reflections in different ways, which will prove of real service in life.

I was not a little pleased, the other day, upon paying a visit at the house of a person of distinction in the country, to find the family assembled round a large table covered with maps, and globes, and books; at the upper end of which sat a young lady, like a professor, reading from the chair. In her hand she held a newspaper. Her father told me, he had long accustomed her, while reading one of those vehicles of intelligence, to acquaint herself with the several towns and countries mentioned, by turning to the names in Salmon's Gazetteer, and then finding them out upon the globe, or a map; in which she was become so great a proficient, as to be at that time in truth giving a lecture in geography to her younger brothers and sisters. It was his farther intention, he said, that from

Campbell's Present State of Europe, she should acquire a sufficient knowledge of the history of the kingdoms around us, as well as our own, to form an idea of their importance and interests respectively, and the relation each bears to the rest. Verily, thought I to myself, this is reading a newspaper to some purpose.

Children, very early in life, are eager for a sight of the newspaper. By being called upon, in a free and easy way, for some little account of what is in it, they may be gradually brought to read with attention, and to fix upon those articles which are most worthy of attention; as also to remember what they have read, from one day to another, and put things together.

While we are in the world, we must converse with the world, and the conversation, in part, will turn on the news of the day. It is the first subject we begin upon; a general introduction to every thing else. All mankind, indeed, are our brethren, and we are interested, or ought to be interested, in their pleasures and their pains, their sufferings or their deliverances, throughout the world. Accounts of these should produce in us suitable emotions, which would tend to the exercise of different virtues, and the improvement of our tempers. We should accustom ourselves, hereby, to rejoice with those

who do rejoice, and sympathise with those who mourn.

When any country is likely to become the theatre of remarkable events and revolutions (as, for instance, Holland, at this present moment), it is worth one's while to refresh one's memory with the history of that country, its constitution, and the changes it has heretofore undergone, the nature and disposition of the people, &c. a sort of knowledge which is sure to be called for. The man who makes himself perfect and correct in it, will gain credit, and give pleasure, in every company into which he may happen to fall.

Whatever instruction is reaped from history, may be reaped from a newspaper, which is the history of the world for one day. It is the history of that world in which we now live, and with which we are, consequently, more concerned than with those which have passed away, and exist only in remembrance: though, to check us in our too fond love of it, we may consider, that the present, likewise, will soon be past, and take its place in the repositories of the dead.

There is a passage in the Night Thoughts which I cannot resist the temptation of transcribing, as it contains one of the most asto-

nishing flights of the human imagination, upon this awful and important subject, the transient nature of all sublunary things :

Nor man alone; his breathing bust expires,
His tomb is mortal; empires die: where, now,
The Roman? Greek? They stalk, an empty name!
Yet few regard them in this useful light,
Though half our learning is their epitaph.
When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,
That loves to wander in thy sunless realms,
O Death! I stretch my view; what visions rise!
What triumphs! Toils imperial! Arts divine!
In wither'd laurels glide before my sight!
What lengths of far-fam'd ages, billow'd high
With human agitation, roll along
In unsubstantial images of air!
The melancholy ghosts of dead renown,
Whisp'ring faint echoes of the world's applause:
With penitential aspect, as they pass,
All point at earth, and hiss at human pride,
The wisdom of the wise, and prancings of the great.

NIGHT IX.

Accounts of the most extraordinary events in old time, are now perused by us with the utmost indifference. With equal indifference will the history of our own times be perused by our descendants; and a day is coming, when all past transactions will appear in the same light, those only excepted by a consideration of which we have been made wiser and better.

There are few, perhaps, by which we may not become so.

What nobler employment for the human mind, than to trace the designs of Providence in the rise and fall of empires; the overthrow of one, and the establishment of another upon its ruins! to watch diligently the different steps by which these changes are effected! to observe the proceedings of the Great Ruler of the universe, always in strict conformity to the rules with which he himself has furnished us! to behold generals with their armies, and princes with their people, executing his counsels while pursuing their own! to view, upon the stage of the world, those scenes which are continually shifting, the different actors appearing in succession, and the gradual progress of the drama, each incident tending to develope the plot, and bring on the final catastrophe!

In the midst of these secular commotions, these conflicts of contending nations, it is useful to observe the effects produced by them on the state of religion upon the earth; while, among the powers of the world, some protect, and others persecute; some endeavour to maintain it in its old forms, and others wish to introduce new; all perhaps, more or less, aim at converting it into an engine of state, to serve

their own purposes, and to avail themselves of that influence which it must always have on the minds of men. Above and beyond these human machinations, a discerning eye sees the controlling power of heaven; religion preserved amidst the tumultuous fluctuations of politics; and the ark sailing in safety and security on the waters which threatened to overwhelm it.

When we read of the events taking place in our own country, the subjects become more interesting, and we are in danger of having our passions roused and fomented. Let us, therefore, be upon our guard, judging of nothing by first reports, but awaiting the calmer hour of reason, preparing to decide on full information. For the prosperity of our country let us be thankful and grateful; in its adversity, sorrowful and penitential; ever careful to correct our own faults, before we censure those of others.

With respect to individuals and their concerns, examples (and they are not wanting among us) of piety, charity, generosity, and other virtues, should effectually stir us up to copy, to emulate, to surpass them; to join, so far as ability and opportunity will permit, in the designs set on foot for the promotion of what is good, the discouragement and suppression of what is otherwise. And here, there is

great choice: many such designs are on foot; and let those who have talents for it, bring forward more. All are wanted.

The follies, vices, and consequent miseries of multitudes, displayed in a newspaper, are so many admonitions and warnings, so many beacons, continually burning, to turn others from the rocks on which they have been shipwrecked. What more powerful dissuasive from suspicion, jealousy, and anger, than the story of one friend murdered by another in a duel? What caution likely to be more effectual against gambling and profligacy, than the mournful relation of an execution, or the fate of a despairing suicide? What finer lecture on the necessity of œconomy, than an auction of estates, houses, and furniture, at Skinner's, or Christie's?—"Talk they of morals?" There is no need of Hutchinson, Smith, or Paley. Only take a newspaper, and consider it well; read it, and it will instruct thee "plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore."

A newspaper is, among other things, a register of mortality. Articles of this kind should excite in our minds reflections similar to those made by one of my predecessors, on a survey of the tombs in Westminster abbey. They are so just, beautiful, and affecting, that my reader, I am sure, will esteem himself under an obliga-

tion to me for bringing them again into his remembrance, by closing this paper with a citation.

"When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tombs of the parents, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow; when I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divide the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together." *

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 26, September 8, 1787.

* Spectator, vol. i. No. 26.

No. CXXVII.

Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα, καὶ νόον ἔγνω.

HOMER.

Providus urbes
Et mores hominum inspexit.

HORAT.

Mirabile dictu!

And, with sagacious ken,
Saw various towns and policies of men.

A wonderful relation.

FOR the entertainment of my readers this day, I purpose laying before them a short account of a very great literary curiosity, which I have no doubt will appear as important to them as it does to myself. It is, in fact, a regular journal kept by Omai, the native of one of the islands in the South Seas, during his residence in England. The short limits of a periodical paper will not permit me to particularise the exact manner in which it came into my possession; but that the literary world may not be hereafter torn into factions by disputes respecting its authenticity, I am determined to deposit the original in the archives of the Royal Society, because I have reason to think, that that learned body will hold it in as much estimation, as they

would do the most ingenious and elaborate disquisition on the constituent principles of the atmosphere, or any other dark and recondite subject.

It appears from this journal, that Omai had picked up a smattering of reading and writing from our sailors during his passage to England; which (unknown to any person) he had afterwards improved during his hours of retirement. I must refer my readers to the journal itself for the motives of his voyage, and for a long and tedious description of the same, that I may be able to dwell longer on those parts which are most interesting to us; and, in particular, his observations on the manners and customs peculiar to this country. It is worth while, en passant, to remark how soon he had begun to philosophise; for he spends more than one hundred pages in accounting for the manner in which the various places, where he arrived, had been first peopled from his own country, the most remote traditions of which give no account of their people having ever sailed further than Bola Bola, or some of the adjacent islands. After a great number of deep disquisitions and curious conjectures, he is obliged, at last, to suppose, that many ages ago a large war-canoe and some small fishing proas had been forced

out to sea, and had gradually peopled all the countries in the world. As to the difference of colour which he observes in the inhabitants of Europe, he accounts for that in a very easy and natural manner, from the coldness of the climate having occasioned a degeneracy in the human species, rendering them less vigorous, and consequently of a pale, meagre, sickly, disagreeable complexion. For the truth of this, he appeals to the fact of the late circumnavigators, during their voyage to the South Seas, in some measure gradually recovering the natural pristine complexion of that place. It is true, he passes over the circumstance of the natives of the cold and inhospitable regions of Terra del Fuego, being darker than himself; but this not suiting his system, like many other philosophers he deems it unworthy of his notice. But lest any of his contemporary philosophers at home should doubt that the natives, as he calls us, of Pretane, are actually derived from those of Otaheite and Ulietea, he assures them that he can prove it from several words in the language of Pretane, still retaining a similarity of sound with others of the same signification in his own. He here enters into several curious etymological discussions, which I shall not detail, as the subject may again occur, when he treats of

some peculiar customs of the English. I shall, therefore, refer my readers to his vocabulary, in which there are some very striking marks of resemblance. I shall, also, pass over the first five hundred pages, that I may directly speak of his arrival in England; where, he says, he no sooner landed, than he was put into a handsome painted house, together with some of his companions, and that four large animals went off with the house, and them in it, faster than he could have run upon level ground at Ulietea; carrying him an immense way up the country. He gives a curious description of these animals, comparing them to large dogs, the only things, we are told, which can possibly convey a faint idea of them. But he endeavours to make up for the deficiency of his description by a picture of a stage coach and six horses, with passengers inside and out, which he hath fixed into his journal; and which, no doubt, with the help of his comments upon it, will be a wonderful curiosity amongst the ladies and grandees of Otaheite. He reprobates our method of living in houses huddled as close together as they can possibly stand, in what are called towns; with which, he adds, these foolish people are not satisfied, for they pile three or four of these towns upon the top of each other.

In one chapter he abounds with curious remarks upon the strange and fantastical dresses of our females, and does not scruple to affirm, that, at first, he was very much disgusted with their unnatural complexions, particularly those that are much tataowed. He thought it very hard that he should himself be obliged to be tataowed; but nothing that he could say or do would prevent it from being done by the most famous tataower in the country. At first, he says, he was horridly mattoowed, or frightened; but found, at last, after a great deal of ceremony, it was nothing more than a slight scratch above the elbow, the mark of which he still retains. He informs us, that many of the females set off their complexions, a little, by rubbing something red upon their cheeks; and, in time, he got reconciled to the complexions of our ladies, in the same manner as, he supposes, the gentlemen of the ships became enamoured of Tynamai and the other ladies of Otaheite. He digresses a good deal into secret history, and makes many remarks which I do not think it altogether prudent to repeat. But on the subject of the red cheeks, he became perfectly delighted with them at last, after going down into the country, where the houses were interspersed with fields and plantations of trees. Here he

found the cheeks were naturally streaked with red, which made them exquisitely beautiful, far superior to those he had seen where the towns were built upon the top of each other. In this part he dwells very much on the charms of Thedai Rymai Dolley, a lady, by his account, of very great consequence, who had the entire dominion over several large animals, as big as those which carried him about the country in houses. He then proceeds with a rapturous description of curds and cream, fresh butter and syllabub, which last he thinks not inferior to the kava, or syllabub, of Otaheite.

He seems delighted by a discovery which he accidentally made, that the chiefs or great men of Pretane were formerly (though very seldom now) called Heroes, which he conceives to be the same as the Erys, or Chiefs, of his own country. In discoursing on this subject, one day at dinner, with the king of the ships, he discovered him to be an earl, which he, also, deems a mere corruption of the former. And he adds, that he immediately asked him to shew the marks of his wounds, that he might be certain that he was a valiant ery or chief; but the king of the ships, we are told, looked rather silly, first laughed, then tried to evade the question; and, at last, being rather closely push-

ed, acknowledged that he had never received any wounds, but in the wars of Venus. Upon his wishing, with native simplicity, for an explanation of those wars, he says, the whole company laughed immoderately; and the king of the ships sent him for a perfect explanation to Thedai rymai dolley.

I am sorry to repeat the very degrading idea which he entertains of us in his forty-fourth chapter, which treats of our great propensity to thieving. He sets out with asserting roundly, that we are all downright thieves from the highest to the lowest, and proves it by observing that the doors and windows of our houses are obliged to be fastened every night with locks, bolts, and bars, of the most curious and intricate construction. These, he says, are to prevent the external thieves from entering; but adds, that they are not sufficient; for every room, closet, and box, in the inside of the house, are, also, obliged to be locked. Husbands and fathers hardly daring to trust either their wives or their children, masters their servants, nor servants their masters; brothers and sisters, friends and foes, being all obliged to have their locks and their keys. Nay, to his utter astonishment, he afterwards found, that even the property of the king himself was not safe. Many artificers, he

says, live merely by making these utensils, so great is the demand, and, of course, the necessity for them.

If my readers should blush a little at this humiliating representation of European manners, they will smile when I mention the particulars of his forty-fifth chapter, in which he proves us, from ocular demonstration, to be men-eaters, absolute cannibals. He never suspected this till he happened, one day, after going through a place called a Market, to get into a great crowd, where he had an opportunity of seeing nearly twenty men slaughtered at once; and one woman actually roasted, immediately after being strangled, much after the same manner as they do pigs in Otaheite. His curiosity was strongly excited to see how they intended to dispose of the bodies of the men; he therefore left the woman half-roasted, and followed the body of one of the men, which was carried to a large house near the place where they had been strangled. With some little difficulty he got admittance, and saw the body stripped and laid naked on a large table, where he understood that it was to continue till the day following, when it would be cut up before a great crowd. His curiosity, he observes, was so strongly excited, that he did not fail to be there the next

day: and arrived in time to see the body cut up and mangled in several places, the head opened, and the brains laid on a platter. The cook, who was dressed in a large apron and sleeves, with a knife in his hand, was standing, all the rest were sitting on benches around. The cook made a very long harangue, which he did not comprehend; but he could plainly observe him, every now and then, taking great pains to shew them all the nicest and fattest parts. But, at last, he says, just as he was going to fall to, when he saw him put the knife into his mouth, he could stand it no longer; for the sight of this, together with the mangled body, struck him with horror, and filled his mind with indignation. In short, he felt such a sudden qualm come over him, that he was obliged to run out of the room, sick and ready to faint, and left them to finish the horrid banquet by themselves. In a note he says, that these meetings must be very frequent; for he saw the bones of several men and women hanging up to dry round the place, which had been lately picked quite clean. And he hopes, after this plain account of what passed immediately under his own observation, none of his countrymen will hereafter doubt of the fact. Yet still, he says, he must do these people the justice to

observe, that, in the main, "notwithstanding their being cannibals, they are naturally of a good disposition, and have not a little humanity." In respect to their humanity, however, he hath sometimes been a little in doubt, from observing a strange and barbarous custom which prevails very much amongst them, viz. that of cutting off the legs and arms of several of their own people; he was seldom a day without seeing one or two, sometimes half a dozen, that had been served in this manner. He took much pains to find out the reason, but all in vain; the only information that he could acquire, was, that they were, generally, a set of brave fellows that had killed a great number of their enemies; that this was the method, and often the only method, which they took to distinguish and reward them.

In his fifty-eighth chapter he speaks of the wonderful love and affection which these people entertain for their king; far exceeding any thing in his own country. For, here, it is usual, he says, for almost every person to get as many round pieces of metal as he possibly can, with the image of the king piccaried upon them; and so astonishingly fond are they of these, that any thing whatever may be obtained for them, and particularly for the yellow ones. Their attach-

ment to these little round images is so great, that, for a long time, he concluded they were the gods of Pretane; but he afterwards learned that this very singular people set a still greater value upon slips of thin cloth or paper (far inferior to the worst cloth at Otaheite), with an image of a female, which he supposes to be the queen, slightly piccaried upon it. He was unable to find out what use this thin paper could possibly be of; and, what was to him still more astonishing, notwithstanding the great value which every body put upon it, yet they strangled, without mercy or exception, almost every person that was ingenious enough to make it. In short, he adds, in many things it is absolutely impossible to assign any reason whatever for the actions of this extraordinary people; who would run all manner of risks, and part with almost every thing they had in the world, to procure such baubles, and yet would laugh at him for setting a proper value upon a red feather.

In the 359th page of his third and last volume, he expresses the most unbounded satisfaction in having found out the true Eatnas, or Gods, which the people of Pretane worship. And when I observed the rapturous manner in which he speaks upon this occasion, I began to be in

hopes that some pains had been taken with this harmless Indian, and that he had, at last, imbibed some proper notions of the deity. I even began to hope, that, together with a taste for the vices and refinements of the new world, he might stand a chance to carry back with him some sparks of that divine religion, with which this kingdom hath been so pre-eminently enlightened. But my readers will easily judge how I was hurt and disappointed, after hearing him speak in such raptures of our Eatna, to observe him express hopes that the king of the ships would permit him to carry two or three of them to Otaheite. He says he was conducted to a very large building, surrounded by a great number of marays or burying places. Here, he was told, the people were assembled to worship their Eatna, or Deity, and he was delighted to hear the large one speak.—The voice was sometimes like thunder from the clouds;—then soft and slow, thrilling through the heart as if it made him wish to go to heaven;—then, on a sudden, it would change, and become quick and lively like the nose flutes of Ulietea, so that he expected every moment the people would jump up and dance the Timorodee. In short, it does not appear from this or any other account which

I have yet seen, that Omai might not have pitched upon the church organ, the chiming clock, or the repeating watch, for the Gods of Great Britain.

THE LOITERER, No. 25, July 18, 1789.

No. CXXVIII.

God made the country, but man made the town.
COWPER.

Sir,

GIVE me leave, by inserting the following account of my life, to make the world reluctantly own, that family pride has snatched at least one young man from the allurements of folly and dissipation, and added one good citizen, father, and husband to his country.

My father was the descendant of a family who traced their origin to the Norman invasion, and actually possessed the castle and demesne lands which had been formally granted to his ancestors by the Conqueror himself. The value of the surrounding estates scarce exceeded 1000*l.* a year, and was all that the havoc of confiscations and forfeitures had suffered to remain of property which once extended over the greatest part of one of our western counties. This moderate revenue, hitherto free from debts or mortgage, had been found sufficient to support the family in a respectable state of independence. Our immediate ancestors had all filled the office of sheriff, were generally chairmen at

the quarter sessions, and sometimes foremen of the jury; delivered their opinion boldly at all public meetings, and were universally looked on as (if not the first at least) the most respectable people in the county.

Long might we have continued in this state of respectability, and long might we have "killed our game on safe paternal grounds," had my father remained contented with being what his father had been before him. But his genius would not stoop to so narrow a plan. He determined to bring himself forward to the notice of the world, and, contrary to the advice of his friends, resolved to offer himself a candidate for a borough (which had once belonged to the family) at the next general election.

I pass over, sir, the many head and heart-aches which this resolution cost him, I will not enumerate the speeches he made, or the liquor he swallowed on this occasion, and shall only say, that neither his eloquence nor his beer were thrown away, and that he had the unspeakable honour of carrying the election, by a considerable majority, against an antagonist of much superior fortune, but greatly beneath us in point of family.

You must not imagine, sir, that his triumph cost him nothing; on the contrary, he might have

said with king Pyrrhus, that such another victory would have ruined him. But as he had probably never heard of king Pyrrhus, this idea gave him no uneasiness; and he cheerfully mortgaged his estate to half its value, convinced that the lucrative posts which he was sure of obtaining from the minister, would abundantly make up the deficiency in his income. He was, perhaps, for I do not assert it, as ignorant and as venal as any member who ever entered the house, and, in consequence of a close attendance on committees, and a sure vote on the side of government, obtained, at the end of three years, a place, not indeed adequate to his wishes, but sufficient to encourage him in hoping for something better. As he now conceived himself a man of consequence, and of course obliged to keep nothing but the best, that is the most expensive company, he soon found his income, even with the addition of his place, by no means adequate to support him in his present style of life; and after a long struggle between the pride of family and the pride of wealth, married the daughter of an opulent citizen, who thought the hard-earned savings of a life of labour and self-denial, well laid out in purchasing a little better blood for his descendants.

This event obliged my father to fix his resi-

dence entirely in the capital, for my mother (whose talent in spending money was at least equal to her father's in saving it) was too fine a lady to exist out of London. Besides, his own business both in and out of the house, left him not many months at liberty; and as he was now certain of being brought in at every election for some ministerial borough, he gave himself no further trouble in keeping up his country connections. Sometimes, indeed, in the effusion of self-important pride, he would talk of revisiting his native county, and occasionally amused his company with the improvements he intended to make in the seat of his ancestors; but the opposition of my mother (who thought the money much better spent in a trip to some watering-place) constantly prevented the execution of a plan in which he was not perhaps very earnest; and, from the time of my birth to the day of his death, he never quitted town but to pass a few weeks at Brighton, or to spend the Christmas recess at the villa of some of his political friends.—As my father and mother now led a most fashionable life, they, of course, gave me a most fashionable education: instead of being sent to one of the respectable schools of this kingdom, I was placed at a paltry seminary near London, where, except a little bad French

and less Latin, I learned nothing but those petty acquirements, which, in the opinion of many, are important enough to preclude the necessity of any kind of learning, information, or taste.—From hence I was removed to a military academy on the Continent; there I learnt to perform my exercise and make the cotillion steps in the most correct and graceful manner, and was equally great at the morning's review and the evening's petit souper.—Being thus alike qualified to discharge the duties of a soldier and a citizen, I was recalled home to take possession of a pair of colours in the guards, which the interest of my father had procured for me, and, two years after, on my coming of age, was, by the same political connection, made member of the British parliament. I was then at the age of twenty-one, and with a very small share of natural or acquired prudence, initiated at once into all the dissipation of a luxurious metropolis. My duty as an officer took up but a small share of my time, and (as some good friend was always ready to tell me when the question was put) I found the House rather an agreeable lounge than a serious occupation. I had, consequently, time enough on my hands to do what I pleased with, and I accordingly passed it in company with a set of young men as thought-

less and dissipated as myself; and as I never wanted health, spirits, or money, and as I had acquired, during my residence in France, the great art of refining away the grosser parts of vicious pleasure, and covering voluptuousness with a veil of sentiment, I think I may fairly conclude I received all the enjoyment which that species of life is capable of affording. In this delirium of fancied happiness, I was but little disturbed by the loss of my father, who, one day, exerted himself so vehemently in defending an unpopular tax against the clamours of opposition, that, at his return home, he was seized with an inflammatory fever, which soon carried him off. As the weakness of conjugal or parental love was never felt by any of our family, and seldom heard of among our acquaintance, this event gave me much less sorrow than it would since have done; and, after the first impression of grief was over, I returned to my usual occupations and my usual pleasures, and, for some years afterwards, my life passed away in the same circle, of business without interest, and dissipation without amusement. From this course of life I was at length roused by a circumstance which I could no longer conceal, even from myself; the fortune which my mother brought, never equal to their state of living,

was not likely to be improved by mine, and by the purchase of my captain's and lieutenant-colonel's commission was now reduced within the compass of a few hundreds. I was therefore under the necessity either of quitting the army, and giving up my town connections, or selling the small remainder of my paternal estate, the net income of which, after deducting the interest of the mortgage and the roguery of the steward, was reduced to little more than three hundred a year. This latter expedient I resolved on without hesitation; for as I had no idea it was possible to live out of the gay world, and always looked on a country gentleman in a contemptible light, the idea of parting with my estate gave me but little uneasiness; and the only part of the business which seriously affected me was the necessity I was under of leaving London in order to inspect the title-deeds, and settle some other matters previous to the sale.

Nor let this be wondered at by those who are unacquainted with the strong influence which early opinions, and confirmed prejudices, will always have over the human mind. What my conduct was then, will be the conduct of all those who have been prematurely introduced into a world, where the tender charms of do-

mestic society, and the sacred respect for the "paterni lares," are held as subjects for laughter, and their possessors marked as objects of ridicule.

THE LOITERER, No. 38, October 17, 1789.

No. CXXIX.

Beatus ille qui procul negotiis——
Paterna rura bobus exercet suis,
Solutus omni fœnore.

HORAT.

Blest is he who, far from business,
Ploughs his own paternal acres,
Free from every interest base!

BRADSTREET.

MY first day's journey was tedious and unpleasant. The gloomy heaths of Surry and the extended downs of Wiltshire are but ill calculated to amuse the thoughts of the melancholy traveller; and of the sources of internal entertainment, my stock was then exceedingly limited. The second passed away much better: a night of sweeter sleep than I had lately enjoyed, had given me a fresh recruit of health and spirits, and I traversed and admired the deep vales and airy mountains which mark the western extremity of the kingdom with a pleasure, I had, till then, thought it impossible to receive from any objects at that distance from the metropolis. A strong proof that the pleasure we take in contemplating the rich scenery of nature is a propensity congenial to the human mind, since we see it continually

breaking out in those, whose mode of education and habits of life have been far from favourable to the improvement of true elegant taste.—The evening of the third day brought me to the residence of my ancestors; and little as I had been accustomed to indulge in gloomy or abstracted ideas, I could not behold the time-worn turrets rising in venerable grandeur above a small hanging wood of oaks, which seemed almost coeval with the mansion, and on which the setting sun just threw his last parting beams, without a mixture of sensations which at that time I could not account for, nor can now describe.

The original castle had been built during the turbulent reign of Stephen, of which the towers, gateway, and keep, remained in rude and primæval simplicity.—The hall and chapel were in the middle style of Gothic, with clustered pillars and fretted roofs, dark, magnificent, and gloomy: and the remainder, which composed the habitable part of the house, was erected during the reign of Henry the Seventh, and built in the light and airy Gothic which at that period was brought to its highest perfection. The whole, though composed in different styles of architecture, and from the neglect of thirty years much gone to decay, formed altogether a grand and picturesque pile of buildings, and

commanded a confined but pleasing prospect over a narrow green vale, which lost itself in a chain of steep hills, and was skirted by a small village from whence our castle and family take their name. Such was the mansion into which I was admitted by a grey-headed servant whose looks completely corresponded with the place, and who, had he not been previously informed of my intended visit, would scarcely have acknowledged the sickly and thin figure which stood before him, as the legitimate descendant of his former masters. Owing, however, to this circumstance, both he and his wife (to whose care the castle and gardens had been committed, at my father's removal to London) were fortunate enough to discover a most striking likeness between myself and every one of my family, whom they had ever seen; and, in the overflowing of their joy, gave me a long detail of the rural and convivial exploits of my predecessors, and, after expatiating on the unbounded hospitality for which the family had been always famous, concluded with observing, "that the whole village would be wild with joy, the moment they heard the young squire was coming to live among them."—He was not mistaken in his conjecture, for he had scarcely finished speaking, when the bells struck up so loud a peal, that

they seemed to endanger the safety of the village steeple. "Good God," I exclaimed, "they are surely not making all this noise about me."—Nothing, however, was more true; for, before I could demand an explanation of what seemed to me so extraordinary a compliment, I was surprised by a sudden vociferation of a large troop of the inferior tenants and peasantry, who were assembled, in a considerable body, to pay their congratulations to the representative of a race who had long been their landlords and benefactors; and were expressing their joy, and bidding him welcome, by several loud, hearty, and repeated cheers.

Amazed as I was at this unlooked-for reception, I had recollection enough to go out and thank them in person for the welcome they had given me, and entreat them to spend the evening in drinking my health at the only ale-house the village afforded.

Though the manner of paying my compliments was not quite in the usual style of the family, the latter part, at least, was perfectly intelligible: they accordingly took the hint, and after affecting wishes for my prosperity, and reiterated shouts of applause, departed to testify their joy in a more substantial manner.—There was something in the scene I had just

been witness to, which gave me sensations hitherto unfelt, and rendered me unfit for any company; I therefore ordered an early supper, and, soon after, retired to my chamber.

Here, having no inclination to sleep, I employed myself in considering the behaviour of the simple but honest rustics; which, at every reflection, raised them higher in my opinion, and inspired me with the first idea of literally coming to live amongst them, by offering a new source of pleasure to my view.—Nor will this appear altogether extraordinary to those who recollect the scenes I had been hitherto engaged in, and the people with whom I had, till now, conversed. Always living either in London or its nearest environs, where the strange mixture of ranks has so blended the whole mass, that the "toe of the peasant gibes the heel of the courtier," I had never entertained the least idea of that almost feudal veneration with which an old family in the country is looked up to by their numerous tenants and dependants, or with what sacred zeal the memory of their patrons and benefactors is transmitted from generation to generation among the sons of labour and penury. In London, I well knew, no one whom I employed in any branch, would have been otherwise moved by my presence or absence, my prosperity

or my ruin, my life or my death, than as the event immediately affected themselves and their own interests, and am clearly convinced, that my valet would have called in a physician on my illness, or an undertaker at my funeral, with the same well-bred composure with which he would have brushed my coat, aired my linen, or combed my hair. Great, therefore, was the reverse, and striking the comparison, between those whom I had left and those whom I found; and it was not till after I had exhausted the powers of reflection, by forming and rejecting a variety of plans, that I sunk into a sleep which lasted till the old chiming clock in the hall had proclaimed the hour of nine.

I arose immediately, and after snatching a hasty breakfast, set out to take a regular survey of the castle, not unaccompanied by my grey-headed friend, for whom I already began to feel a great respect, and from whose notes I expected to receive great information in my tour.—We first visited the hall, where the suspended suits of armour, the large collection of javelins, pikes, and spears, &c. curiously arranged along the walls, the wide chimney pieces and massy oaken tables, attested alike the valour and the hospitality of the ancient possessors of the castle.—My guide then conducted me to a long gallery,

where an extended line of ancestors entirely occupied one side of the apartment, and frowned, in sullen majesty, from their gorgeous and dusty frames.—My conductor was here very eloquent, retailed numberless anecdotes of their martial prowess, and related the various achievements for which each of them had been distinguished; and (though the confession may possibly draw a smile from your readers) I could not contemplate the manly appearance and consider the hardy deeds of my "steel-clad sires," without thinking myself a very insignificant and degenerate being, and looking on my own past achievements in a most contemptible light.—After slightly surveying the other apartments, we entered the chapel, where the beautiful perspective of the aisle, the antique appearance of the tombs (on which the armed warriors and their consorts reposed at length, side by side, with uplifted hands, surrounded by a troop of kneeling children), set off by the soft and mellow light which streamed from the pointed windows, gave me a solemn sensation which I never experienced at the entrance of any modern edifice. Here I soon found that my conductor had not over-rated the merits of the family: the blazoned arms, the long inscriptions on the monuments, and the tattered banners which were suspended

over them, bore witness to their thirst for military glory, and their success in the fields of battle. And let not such as are unacquainted with the various turns of the human mind, wonder if my enthusiasm was, by this time, raised to the highest pitch, and if, at this moment, I felt a horror not to be described at the idea of parting with a place of which I had so lately learned the value; not without a secret resolution of submitting to any mortification, rather than give up the seat of my ancestors to the mercy of some opulent citizen, or overgrown contractor. Full of this idea, I strolled into the garden, and, flinging myself down at the foot of a large beech, endeavoured to hit on some plan which might extricate me from my present difficulties, without a sacrifice which I was, every moment, more determined not to make. None however, occurred; for, indeed, I knew neither the amount of my debts nor the extent of my income, and of all serious business I was, both by education and habit, entirely ignorant. How my deliberations would have ended I know not, had I not been interrupted by the arrival of a person, to whom as I am obliged for every comfort I now enjoy, I must beg leave to introduce more particularly to your notice.

The father of Mr. B——, who now approached

me, was, many years, rector of the parish, and tutor to mine; in which situation he so endeared himself to the latter, that, at his death, he not only presented his son to the vacant benefice, but also obtained for him, by his political connections, another living from the chancellor.—He soon after married an amiable young woman of some fortune, to whom he had been long attached; and with whom he had ever since passed a life of tranquillity, content, and virtue.—Such was the person who now came, with the eager zeal of gratitude, to pay his respects to the son of his benefactor.—As he was a sensible man, and above the common forms, our conversation soon became unreserved on both sides, and I hesitated not to accept his invitation to pass the remainder of the day with his family. I, accordingly, accompanied him to the parsonage, and was introduced to his wife, and two elegant daughters, who rose to receive me with a grace and air which convinced me, that true ease and elegance were not so entirely confined to the circles of the great, as the great may be inclined to imagine. Indeed, the lively and the spirited conversation in which the day slipped away, and the tender and affectionate behaviour of the family, still heightened my ideas of them.

There saw I a husband and wife actually fond

of each other; I saw young women beautiful without vanity, and improved without affectation. I compared their manners with those of the women I had usually conversed with, and went to bed quite in love with—a country life.

I was roused next morning from my dreams of rural happiness, with which, perhaps, Miss B. was a little connected, by the information that Mr. Plumb, who lately purchased a neighbouring estate, was come to treat with me for mine. —As he had come some miles on this errand, I could not refuse to talk to him; but began the conference with a thorough determination to break it off the first favourable opportunity, and he was presently so good as to furnish me with one; for, amongst other arguments for lowering the price, he observed that the house itself was worth nothing, being such a ranshackled old place that it must be pulled down; that he even doubted if the materials would be good enough to be of service: this was too much; therefore, "glad of a quarrel, straight I shut the door."—Something, however, was to be done, and, after a very short struggle, I opened my whole situation to my new friend, and requested his advice in clearing my affairs. I will not take up your time by unnecessary and uninteresting details, and will only say that he warmly entered into

my concerns, and, being a man of business as well as a scholar, he soon detected the false accounts of my steward, and so strongly convicted him of roguery, that he was happy to refund the money, with the addition of interest, to save himself from punishment.—By the advice of my friend, I sold my colonel's commission, my house in town, plate and furniture, which, together with the above-mentioned money, not only payed off my debts, but left a sum sufficient to put the castle and its environs in full and complete repair. Here, then, I retired in the twenty-ninth year of my age, and, after three years' moderate economy, with the assistance of a fortunate legacy, was enabled to clear my estate from all encumbrances; and, the moment I had done so, solicited the hand of one whose heart I had long had an interest in, and led to the altar of my chapel the eldest daughter of my best friend.

With her I have now lived six years, in as much happiness as our state will admit of, and, excepting those trifling vexations to which humanity is heir, I may fairly say, I never knew an uneasy moment. My health and spirits are preserved by the sports of the field; my mind is improved, and my heart amended, by the conversation and example of my Eliza; and I have

the additional pleasure of seeing a beautiful and healthy family rising round me, none of whom (if I can help it) shall ever receive a town education.

And now, sir, I know not whether I ought to apologise to you, for taking up so much of your time; since, if the story is uninteresting, the moral may be of use.

I do not, indeed, imagine that the present age is, in general, worse than the preceding ones; on the contrary, if it has lost some virtues, it has escaped many crimes; but its most striking and (in my opinion) most blameable characteristic, is a strange propensity among all ranks, to leave their habitations in the country, for many months together, often the greater part of the year, in order to enjoy the expensive and empty pleasures of a luxurious and over-grown capital.

Much might be urged, were I inclined to moralise, on the folly of this practice.—The cruelty of taking money, which, as it is the produce of the earth, ought to be spent amongst its cultivators, to lavish on the purveyors of luxury and pride; the danger of breeding their children in too expensive a manner for their income, are but few of the many reasons which might be brought in support of my argument.—But as I

have observed that no reason weighs so much as that which affects our gratification, I will only desire such of our country gentlemen who, like Sir Francis Wronghead, are desirous of going up to town and becoming parliament men, to remember the saying of James the First:

"You country gentleman (said the monarch), when in the country, are like ships in a river, and make a great show; but in town you are like ships in the sea, and appear to be nothing at all."

I am, sir, yours, &c.

AGRESTIS.

THE LOITERER, No. 39, October 24, 1789.

No. CXXX.

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.
VIRGIL.

——— Four-footed, bound,
And shake, with solid hoof, the trembling ground.

AMONG the sources of those innumerable calamities which, from age to age, have overwhelmed mankind, may be reckoned, as one of the principal, the abuse of words. Dr. South has two admirable discourses on the subject; and it is much to be wished, that a continuation could be carried on, by some proper hand, enumerating the words, which, since his time, have successively come into vogue, and been, in like manner, abused to evil purposes by crafty and designing men.

It is well known what strange work there has been in the world, under the name and pretence of Reformation; how often it has turned out to be in reality, Deformatiom; or, at best, a tinkering sort of business, where, while one hole has been mended, two have been made.

I have my eye, at present, on an event of this kind which took place in very early times, and is supposed to have been productive of many

and great advantages to the species; I mean the alteration brought about in the "economy of human walking;" when man, who, according to the best and ablest philosophers, went originally on four legs, first began to go upon two. I hope it will be excused, if I venture humbly to offer some reasons why I am led to doubt, whether the alteration may have been attended by all the advantages so fondly imagined.

There is something suspicious in the history given of this reformation. It is said to have had the same origin with that ascribed by Dr. Mandeville to the moral virtues. It was the "offspring of flattery, begot upon pride." The philosophers discovered, that man was proud: they attacked him, in a cowardly manner, on his weak side, and by arguments, the sophism of which it might be easy enough, perhaps, if there were occasion, to unravel and expose, prevailed upon him to quit his primæval position; and, whether fairly or not, they coaxed him upon two. How far any good is to be expected from a reformation founded on such principles, the reader must judge for himself.

By the account with which the authors of it have furnished us, thus much is certain, that nothing can be more unnatural: and yet, say these philosophers, at other times, "Whatever

you do, follow nature;" a precept, which, in general, they seem very well disposed to practise to the best of their abilities. A child naturally goes on all four; and we know how difficult a matter it is to set him an end, or to keep him so. He has not even the stability of a nine-pin, which will stand till it be bowled down. For my own part, I never see a child's forehead with a great bump upon it, or swathed up in a black-pudding lest it should receive one, but I am irresistibly impelled to bewail this pretended reformation, as a most notorious and melancholy defection from our primitive condition.

When the two children brought up to man's estate apart from all human beings, by the command of a king of Egypt, who imagined, that the language which they should speak must necessarily be the original language of the world—when these children, I say, had the honour to be introduced at court, amidst a circle of all the learned, and wise, and noble personages of that celebrated country, history bears her testimony, that they proceeded up the drawing-room, and made their way to the royal presence, upon all four. I am aware, that some have thought, they threw themselves into that attitude, from the dread and awe inspired into

them by the sight of majesty; others, still more refined, have supposed they might have done so to adapt themselves to the employment of those whom they found assembled in that place, and be prepared either to creep or to climb, or both, as opportunity offered. But I cannot apprehend, that the course of their education could have qualified them for speculations so abstruse as these; and, therefore, I must take leave to say, I look upon the fact to be good evidence, that such was the attitude proper to man.

I am still farther confirmed in my opinion, from that strong propensity visible in mankind to return to it again. The posture into which we have been seduced, is productive of constant uneasiness. We are in a fidget from morning to night; to relieve us from which, the expense of chairs and sophas is a very considerable tax upon our property; and, after all, we cannot compose ourselves perfectly to rest, but when recumbent upon our beds. That our sole business is with earth, universal practice seems to determine. Why, then, should we look after any thing else? or why be reproached with, O curvæ in terras animæ! especially when we recollect the fate of the poor astronomer, who, while he was gazing at the stars, fell into a ditch?

It deserves notice, that some of our most distinguished titles of honour are borrowed from our fellow-creatures the quadrupeds, whose virtues we are ambitious to emulate. An accomplished young gentleman of family, fortune, and fashion, glories in the name, style, and title of a buck. You cannot pay him a greater compliment, than by bestowing on him this appellation; and indeed, no one reason in the world can be assigned, why he should walk upon two.

The opinion of a great commercial nation, like our own, cannot with more certainty be collected from any circumstance, than from the management of the most important article of finance. Now, we find that article entrusted to the care of bulls and bears. And although a bear, which is a quadruped, by a metamorphosis no less sudden and surprising than any in Ovid, be at times transformed into a duck, which is a biped, yet it is observed, that there is a somewhat awkward about him ever after. He moves, indeed, but his motions are not as they should be, and he is, from thenceforth, said not to walk, but to waddle. It may be added, that we never hear of a duck commencing dancing-master; whereas captain King informs us, "the Kamtchadales are not only obliged to the bears for

what little advancement they have hitherto made in the sciences or polite arts, as also the use of simples both internal and external, but they acknowledge them likewise for their dancing-masters; the bear-dance among them being an exact counterpart of every attitude and gesture peculiar to this animal, through its various functions. And this dance is the foundation and ground-work of all their other dances, and what they value themselves most upon."

I could have wished, that one of these Siberian teachers had been present the other day, to have bestowed a lecture upon a friend of mine, who had been instructed to marshal his feet in a tolerably decent way; to move forward by advancing one before the other, and backward by sliding one behind another; in short, he had attained some proficiency in what Dr. South styles, "that whimsical manner of shaking the legs, called dancing;" when, all at once, holding up his hands in an angle of forty-five degrees, with a countenance full of ineffable distress, and a most lamentable accent, he exclaimed to the master, "But, sir, what shall I do with these?"

Nor is the complaint of my friend at all singular. For the truth is, (and why should I dissemble it?) that since we have left off to put our arms to their due and proper use of fore-legs,

they are ever in the way, and we know not what upon earth to do with them. Some let them dangle, at will, in a perpendicular line parallel with their sides; some fold them across their bosoms, to look free and easy; some stick them a-kimbo, in defiance; some are continually moving them up and down, and throwing them about, so as to be at variance with their legs, and every other part of their bodies; as was the case with Dr. Johnson, when Lord Chesterfield had like to have fallen into a deliquium, by looking at him, and could consider the author of the English dictionary in no other light than that of an ill-taught posture-master. Some thrust their hands, as far as they can, into their breeches pockets. This last is a bad habit enough; because they who find nothing in their own pockets (which perhaps pretty generally happens) may be tempted to try what they can find in those of others. While fore-legs were in fashion, the limbs, which are now the cause of so much embarrassment to us, had full employment; it might be said, "every man his own horse;" and when one considers the present extravagant price of horses, one is induced on this account also to wish, that it had still continued to be so.

As I am upon the subject of the reformations

made in our persons, I cannot help mentioning a little dab of one, effected in an age so distant, that no system of chronology, within my knowledge, has marked the era, much as it deserves to have been marked. The period is altogether unknown, when our nature was first despoiled of an appendage equally useful and ornamental—I mean a tail; for, with an eminently-learned philosopher of North-Britain, I am most firmly persuaded, that it was originally a part of our constitution; and that, in the eye of superior beings, man, when he lost that, lost much of his dignity. If a conjecture might be indulged upon the subject (and, alas! what but conjectures can we indulge?) I should be inclined to suppose, that the defalcation, now under consideration, was coæval with the change of posture discussed above. No sooner had man unadvisedly mounted on two, but his tail dropped off; or rather, perhaps, in the confusion occasioned by the change, it hitched in a wrong place, and became suspended from his head. But how very easy would it be, when the books are open, to make a transfer, and restore it to its proper situation! that very respectable person, whom Swift humorously describes, as "lately come to town, and never seen before by any body," has been known, upon some occasions, to have

appeared in a tie-wig; which, doubtless, was his full dress for balls and other public assemblies. But by way of light and airy morning dishabille, no one can doubt of his looking admirably well in a queue.

I am sensible this is a topic which requires to be treated with the utmost caution and delicacy; and, therefore, feeling the ground tremble under me, I shall not venture to advance farther upon it; but from the disposition prevalent among us to copy the manners of creatures so much our inferiors, I shall conclude by encouraging my readers to hope, the time cannot be very far distant, when we shall all have our tails again, and once more go upon all four.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 23, August 18, 1787.

That there should be found, in the present era of civilisation, any cultivated mind so quixotic as to maintain the reality of the positions introduced with such exquisite irony into this paper, may reasonably excite astonishment. Yet, not only these, but many more almost equally extravagant, formed the settled creed of Lord Monboddo. The Monthly Reviewer of the third volume of his lordship's Ancient Metaphysics, has taken the trouble of extracting the chief articles of belief to which he, Lord Monboddo, declared his unfeigned assent and consent.

1. " That the animal called the Ouran-Outang is a man.

2. " That men in the nomade state, which was originally the life of all men, were little better than mere Ouran-Outangs.

3. "That this life was first disused in Egypt, where men lived in cities thousands of years before there were any such associations of men in Europe.

4. "That human nature was in its greatest perfection in the flourishing state of ancient Egypt, and has ever since been declining.

5. "That Pythagoras, who was instructed in Egypt, was the greatest philosopher, and most extraordinary man, that ever lived—of a nature somewhat between a god and a man —a superior intelligence, inhabiting such a body as ours; and that all the philosophy which yet remains in the world, is derived from his school.

6. "That, in more ancient times, there were many such beings as Pythagoras was, who were revered under the names of heroes and demigods.

7. "That there are in man four distinct minds, the elemental, the vegetable, the animal, and the intellectual; and that these together form the Tetractys of the Pythagoreans, which bears an analogy to the Trinity in the Divine Nature, held also by the disciples of Pythagoras.

8. "That the natural state of man is to live without clothing, habitation, fire, and language; that he should go upon all four; and that every thing which has been added by human art, taken away or altered, with respect to the animal life of man, has been for the worse.

9. "That raw vegetables are the natural, and therefore the best food of man.

10. "That there has been, in every nation, an heroic age, that is, an age of extraordinary longevity, and of wonderful size and strength of body: that in those ages, the ordinary time of gestation was near twelve lunar months; and that such was the age of Greece at the time of the Trojan war, when Nestor lived to the third century, and Helen at eighty years of age was stolen by Paris, and twenty years after was a goddess among women.

11. "That the man Ouran-Outang, and the Patagonians, are, at present, between eight and nine feet in height; that

there are people in South America twelve feet high; that the Germans in the time of Julius Cæsar were about nine feet: that the body of Orestes was ten feet and a half; and that of Ajax between twelve and thirteen feet in height: that Stonehenge was built by giants, the body of one of whom was found near Salisbury upwards of fourteen feet high: that there were two extraordinary giants in ancient Greece, nine fathom high; and at Thessalonica, the body of a giant was found ninety-six * French feet in height.

12. "That there are men with tails; that there are whole nations of men with but one leg; that in Æthiopia there are men who have their eyes in their breasts, and others who have only one eye, and that in their forehead: that there have been men who had the heads and tails of dogs, and were expert archers; and that there are sea-men and sea-women, or mermaids.†"

MONTHLY REVIEW, Old Series, Vol. 72, p. 355.

Dr. Johnson, speaking of these wild theories of Lord Monboddo, observes, "It is a pity to see Lord Monboddo publish such notions as he has done; a man of sense, and of so much elegant learning. There would be little in a fool doing it; we should only laugh; but when a wise man does it, we are sorry. Other people have strange notions; but they conceal them. If they have tails, they hide them; but Monboddo is as jealous of his tail as a squirrel."

BOSWELL'S JOURNAL, 3d Edit. p. 99.

* This story (says Lord M.) is so well attested, that I think it is impossible to doubt it.

† The evidence of the existence of mermaids, has lately been brought forward with such additional facts as almost to shake our incredulity.

No. CXXXI.

——— Ridiculum acri
Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res.
HORAT.

For ridicule shall frequently prevail,
And cut the knot, when graver reasons fail.
FRANCIS.

It is wisely ordained by the laws of England, that, "the person of the monarch is sacred;" as also, that, "the king can do no wrong." The meaning of this last maxim I take to be, that if wrong should happen at any time to be done, the blame is to be laid upon the administration, and not upon the king.

A friend, some years ago, took me into the house of commons, to attend the debates upon the opening of a session; when an honourable gentleman made so free with the speech, which I had but just before heard most gracefully pronounced by his majesty from the throne, that my hair stood an end, and I was all over in a cold sweat; till, towards the close of his oration, he relieved and restored me, by mentioning, in a parenthesis, that the speech was always considered, in that assembly, as the speech of the minister.

Sheltering myself, therefore, under this distinction, I cannot refrain from offering a few remarks on a late production, pregnant, as many are of opinion, with much mischief to the community. The reader sees that I mean, " A Proclamation for the encouragement of piety and virtue, and for preventing and punishing of vice, profaneness, and immorality."

That the scheme proposed should be carried into execution, does not indeed seem probable. When we consider how long vice, profaneness, and immorality, have been increasing among us, what a powerful party they have formed, how much fashion is on their side, and how very strong the tide runs, the attempt may be thought to resemble that of the man who endeavoured to stop the Thames at London-bridge with his hat, unless the rich and the great would set the example.

I have always been an enemy to pains and penalties. The word punishment is a bad word; and the thing itself is much worse. When once it begins, the wisest man living cannot tell where it will end, or what will become of our liberties. For as the sheep-stealer said, " If a gentleman cannot kill his own mutton, without being hanged for it, I should be glad to know what we have got by the revolution." In short, one

must be without a nose, not to smell something here of arbitrary power.

The idea of a Sunday unenlivened by a little innocent play, is a very dull and dreary one. I know a family in town that has made the experiment. The consequence was, that before nine in the evening, the members of it found themselves so cross, peevish, and out of temper, that had it not been for an early supper, and a glass of good wine, they could not have gone to bed in Christian charity with each other.

But much more distressful still was the case of a lady, whose husband, being in the commission, had lent his assistance to suppress gaming on a Sunday, in a neighbouring public-house. It struck him, that cards on that day, in a private house, might not, just then, be quite so proper; and he ventured to hint as much to his lady. She had always apprehended the Gospel to have been designed for the poor, and was astonished to find that any thing in the proclamation could apply to persons of her rank in life. "The party was made, and what could be done?"—A thought, however, luckily occurred; and when the company was assembled, after an apology suitable to the occasion, instead of the card tables, she introduced the entertainment of catches and glees. The thing took mightily,

and was judged a pretty variety. Otherwise a disappointment of such a nature, spreading, as it must have done, like an electrical shock, through all the polite circles, might have bred bad blood, and produced a general insurrection.

It fares with religion as with a shuttle-cock, which is stricken from one to another, and rests with none. The rich apprehend it to have been designed for the poor; and the poor, in their turn, think it calculated chiefly for the rich. An old acquaintance of mine, who omitted no opportunity of doing good, discoursed with the barber who shaved him on his manner of spending the sabbath (which was not quite as it should be), and the necessity of his having more religion than at present he seemed to be possessed of. The barber, proceeding in his work of lathering, replied that he thought he had tolerably well for a barber; as, in his apprehension, one third of the religion necessary to save a gentleman, would do to save a barber.

I mention this because I have received a letter of considerable length, praying redress of grievances, from a person who lets lodgings in Broad St. Giles's. He speaks of a very snug and comfortable neighbourhood there, which is likely to be broken up, and dispersed, by the proclamation, and nobody can well tell why.

He himself holds twenty houses, by lease, which are let out, ready furnished. Matters are conducted in a manner so perfectly economical, that though there is no more than one bed in each room, there are usually two or three, and sometimes even four, occupiers of that one room and bed. That the furniture is of an expensive and luxurious kind, no one can say; as it consists only of a stump bedstead, a flock bed, a pair of sheets (frequently only one sheet), a blanket or two, a chair or two (generally without backs), and a grate, but mostly without shovel, tongs, and poker. The sheets are usually marked with the name of the owner; and the words, "stop thief!" are added, for private reasons.

In two adjoining alleys are forty more houses, let out in like sort to inhabitants, in number 400, consisting of whores, pickpockets, house-breakers, and thieves of every description, from all quarters of the town. But what then? They must have lodgings as well as other people; and if they were to be in the street all night, it would be dangerous for the rest of his majesty's subjects to pass. To avoid suspicion, the houses are continually lighted, and kept open all night; and to shew that hypocrisy has no place there, what used to be practised only

in private at midnight, is now practised at midday.

To accommodate the poor, there are twopenny lodging-houses; one man, in particular, makes up every night, thirty-five beds, and takes in men and women, at twopence or threepence a night; but if a man and woman come together, he receives one shilling a night for the two.

No society can be under better regulations than this is. Thus, for instance, when a prostitute has decoyed a man, and robbed him, the mistress of the house has half the pay and the plunder: and if one of these ladies intrude upon that beat and walk which another regards as her exclusive right, the matter is determined, as much greater matters are, by a battle.

Nor can there be reason to fear, that this society should ever become so numerous, as to be any annoyance to the public; since care is taken, that a sufficient number is hanged every session, to maintain a balance; and some rooms are always reserved for the reception of the dead bodies, which are brought back after execution, to their lodging, till they can be otherwise disposed of.

Such is the substance of my friend's letter, which he desires may be communicated, through the channel of my paper, to his countrymen,

that they may know what they have to expect from the present system of despotism; when a few neighbours cannot live peaceably together, without being disturbed, and hunted out, by proclamations. He hopes all honest men will join with him in a petition for the removal of evil counsellors; and concludes with the old British axiom, my house is my castle; under no dread, as it should seem, of the retort courteous once made to such a declaration by a magistrate in Oxford, of arbitrary principles; "then, sir, the castle shall be your house."

It is not easy to estimate the loss which the community at large will sustain by the dissolution of this worthy neighbourhood. For if a gentleman be robbed of his watch, it must be replaced by another; if his portmanteau be stolen, he must buy new clothes and linen; if his house be broken open, and stripped of its furniture, he must apply to the upholsterer; if he be beaten and wounded, to the surgeon; nay should he be even killed, the undertaker and the sexton will be the better for it; and if the usual quantity of gin be not consumed, ruin must seize on those who vend it; trade must stagnate. Thus incontrovertibly doth it appear, that private vices (if indeed they may be called vices) are public benefits.

I say, "if they may be called vices;" because I do not see why, should we so please, they may not be called virtues. The nature of things, in themselves, is nothing; our opinion of them is all; and if our opinion alters, the names of things should alter with it. Indeed, they do, and must do so. Thus, when two gentlemen go out with pistols and shoot each other through the head, or the heart, it is no more than an affair of honour; when one seduces the wife or the daughter of another, it is merely an attachment; and to cheat a man out of his estate is only to pluck a pigeon. In the neighbourhood above described, the nomenclature is much farther advanced, and has nearly attained perfection. They have a language peculiar to themselves, in which when they relate their transactions, they may have been doing what is perfectly just and right, for any thing we can tell to the contrary, since the words are not to be found in any dictionary but their own.

Here, then, as some will think, is a more expeditious way of preventing vice, than by proclamation; and what is much to be desired, of doing it without infliction of punishment, by the sole and simple expedient of voting vice to be virtue.

The scheme is plausible; but, I must confess,

I have my doubts. If we once vote vice to be virtue, I am afraid, that, by a necessity of nature, virtue, per contra, must become vice; and so we shall but be where we were: there will still be vice in the world.

When the welfare of his country is concerned, every man loves to be a little bit of a projector. On going deeper into the subject, I think I have hit upon a plan, which will make root and branch work of it, and do the business effectually. That the effect may cease, the cause must be removed. Now, what is the cause of vice? Most undoubtedly, the law; for were there no law, there could be no transgression. Abolish, then, at once, the use of all law, human and divine. I grant the step a bold one, requiring a minister of firmness and resolution to take it; but when once taken, the advantages will be many and great.

In the first place, vice will, at one stroke, be extirpated from the face of the earth; for when a man has no law but his own will, we may defy him to do any thing illegal. Never trust to moral impossibility, where physical is to be had.

Secondly, it will put an end to the expense and trouble of law-suits; and (as equity would fall with law) to all tedious and everlasting suits in chancery, so much, and so long complained of.

Thirdly, it will be a saving to the nation of one tenth of the produce of all the lands in England and Ireland; and consequently put a stop to the ravages of the White-boys, and Right-boys, in this latter kingdom, as well as all disputes between ministers and their parishioners, in the former; since, as there would be no more occasion for reading prayers and preaching, the payment of tithes must, of course, be at an end.

Fourthly, it will procure a perpetual holiday for the gentlemen of either robe, who, in future, will have nothing to do, but to hunt, shoot, and play at cards. The same may be said, respecting the members of both houses of parliament.

Fifthly, it will make Sunday as cheerful a day, as any day of the week.

Lastly, it will remove all odium from the magistrates who have granted a licence to the Dog and Duck.

Such are the conveniences that would attend the execution of my plan; and after considering the subject on all sides, for six hours, in my elbow-chair, I protest, I cannot think of any one inconvenience, to set against them; nor can I devise any method likely to be so effectual in redressing the grievances occasioned by the Proclamation to the subject.

It remains only, that I mention one which

may possibly be occasioned by it to the crown; and which indeed I might not have thought of, but for the visit paid me, as I was closing this paper, by an honest farmer.— "So, Robin (said I to him), rare news from London! the king is to be served now only by good and virtuous courtiers!"—"Ah, Lord have mercy upon me, sir (replied Robin), God bless his majesty, and grant him long to reign! But I am afraid as how he will be sometimes obliged to help himself."

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 29, Sept. 29, 1787.

No. CXXXII.

Tell,
Why thy canonis'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements! Why the sepulchre
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again!

SHAKSPEARE.

Sir,

BORN of illustrious parents, with the fairest prospects of happiness and glory, some star seems to have shed its malignant influence over every action of my life; but why do I talk of a life, which, though never stained with a base or unworthy action, yet terminated in a most miserable end! The annals of your country's history exempts me from the necessity of being my own biographer, and many a page records the sufferings of the unfortunate Duke Humphrey. Crossed in all my views of happiness by the machinations of a haughty prelate, my government impeded, and the infant ear of my nephew poisoned by the whispers of insidious noblemen, to whose ambition I at last fell a sacrifice; my mind prophesied to me a small allotment of worldly happiness, and my attention

was fixed on that tranquillity beyond the grave, to which my exemplary life seemed to lay claim.

By the assistance of my enemies (who, perhaps, beheld my peaceable disposition), I obtained a premature passport to the other world, and my small remains of ambition were extinguished with my life. But my cares were destined to survive the grave; according to the laws which the hospitality of my ancestors had imposed upon me, my house was ever the refuge of the distressed and strangers; poverty was never denied admittance at my gates, or departed unsatisfied, and few ever left my hospitable mansion without bestowing a blessing on its walls, and wafting a fervent prayer to heaven for the welfare of its owner.

Should this account of the manner of my life appear vain-glorious in your eyes, recollect that I am as much above, as I am beyond, the resentment of mankind; it nought avails me to be the object of either their dislike or approbation; but that the same spirit of patriotism which animated my mind when living, now actuates my soul, bereft of mortal life. The chief end I proposed from this letter is public utility; and plain matter of fact, unembellish-

ed by fiction of any kind, and told in the simple language of truth, is necessary in the narrative of my misfortunes.

To you who daily behold the different manners of the present noblemen of England, it would appear incredible that my death was a considerable calamity to men of various denominations. The indigent who had frequently experienced my bounty, and the poor who had so often feasted in my halls, with the loudest lamentations, and most piercing accents of sorrow, bewailed the loss of their benefactor. Their cries and exclamations recalled me to earth, though not to mortal life; a table was appointed for the reception of the poor and hungry; an irresistible power placed me at the head of it, and I again became the host of the indigent. Here I began to experience what my confessor had formerly told me concerning purgatory; and my situation indeed, at that time, transcended in wretchedness the most dismal ideas I had ever entertained of it. Judge of the feelings of a mind, sensible to the touches of humanity, and naturally overflowing with the milk of human kindness, on seeing no one amongst hundreds of my guests rise satisfied with their dinner, or grateful to their entertainer. No consideration of the quality of a

prince of the blood royal of England could induce them to act with common civility at my table. They unanimously reprobated my provisions, execrated me as the vilest caterer the world had ever produced, and avowed that nothing but necessity should ever induce them to become my guests; and whilst they could procure a dinner at any other place, they should equally despise the duke and his ill-furnished table. The wits wondered that a man who lived so bad should have died so well; and whilst I obtained the noble title of the good, my dinners were never mentioned, but with signs of loathing and detestation; nor could the sense of decorum ever influence their conduct so as to make my guests behave with any degree of order or regularity in my company; some standing, others sitting, others lying down; and one species in particular, whom I had frequently the honour of entertaining, I mean poets, generally walked up and down the room with the gestures of insanity, whilst they partook of my repasts. In my life-time I could never keep my headstrong countrymen in proper subjection; and even when I had the executive powers of justice to enforce my decrees, they were frequently treated with contempt; now, deprived of both the insignia and real authority

of power, by what means can I preserve order or regularity, or what laws are sufficiently potent to restrain a licentious multitude. The celebrated tower of Babel could never have exhibited a scene of greater confusion than my banqueting room daily affords, and discord seems to have abundantly shaken her torch over the heads of my devoted guests. Divested of my grosser mortal substance, my senses were raised to an exquisite pitch of feeling, which served to add to my misery. Imagine me placed invisibly at my table, my ears stunned with the frenzical effusions of neglected poets, who never ceased pouring forth execrations against an ungrateful world! my eyes offended with the forms of poverty and wretchedness, which resorted to my table, amidst the loud railings of despair, and the tears of silent sorrow, and then confess my tortures unequalled in the annals of history. The company of several of the most eminent wits that ever adorned this island, proved rather distressing than consolatory to me. Butler, Otway, and Chatterton, were frequently my guests; but a silent melancholy, occasionally interrupted by paroxysms of anger, threw an impenetrable veil over the brightness of their understandings, and (since I knew their worth and high deserts)

rendered them more disagreeable companions than almost any others. They complained that my food was too unsubstantial even for a poet, and said, they should prefer a tough beef-steak to all the delicacies of my table. That these murmurs were not without foundation, I am very ready to own; my banquet is certainly too aerial to give satiety to mortals. I am afraid my dishes are not altogether wholesome, that they promote wind in the stomach, and that the cholic is a frequent consequence of my repasts. But when the advantages of this institution, at the head of which I am placed, are weighed against the inconveniency of my unsubstantial fare, Duke Humphrey's banquet will be exalted in the eyes of all judicious people. It merits our respect, since it is erected on the noble basis of charity. Every man in affliction or poverty, I consider as my brother, and accordingly invite to my dinner. Neither religion, politics, nor country, are impediments to a place at my table; every man who wishes to dine with me, has permission to do it, though I am repeatedly slighted; and few men ever favor me with their company, unless constrained by necessity. I never harbour resentment, or refuse them admittance, when they are neglected by others. Hundreds dine with

me daily; yet so impartial am I in the distribution of my favours, that no man can say he has made a better dinner than his neighbour; and if thousands more were added to the number, they should experience an equal division, and I should be equally well prepared to receive them. So much have I said in defence of the institution, and it now remains for me to declare wherein I feel myself aggrieved.

That source of all evil, bad company, is what gives me the most uneasiness. No wretch, however wicked, is thought unfit company for Duke Humphrey, nor do the vilest or most abject of men ever think themselves obliged to behave with decency in my presence; sharpers of every denomination, when fortune proves unfavourable, stun my ears with the most horrid blasphemies, and I am obliged to be a silent and invisible hearer of their impieties. It is a duty I owe myself, my high rank, and family, to endeavour to snatch myself from the contagion of bad company; and although it has been a principal study of my life to rescue the distressed from the iron hand of adversity, I still think, that such wretches should not have the honor of associating with so many more deserving men; and that it must ever remain

a disgrace to Englishmen, that felons and sharpers should be said to dine in company with a prince of the blood royal. I have not the least objection to that species of vagabonds denominated players; they frequently partake of my repasts, and I find them facetious under the pressure of want, and that they bear hunger with a merrier disposition than any other set of men. But the whining lover was a being I always detested, and was sorry to see in my company. I had also an insuperable aversion to the fanatical journeymen of Wesley, Whitfield, &c. who were oftentimes necessitated to partake of my feasts; hypocrisy was a vice to which I was always inimical; and as it is a prominent feature of the methodists, they, beyond all others, are the objects of my hatred and contempt.

Through the medium of your paper, I hope, by stating my grievances to obtain redress; to you I address myself, ye noblemen of England, whose ample fortunes enable you to feed the hungry, and wipe the tear of sorrow from the cheek of affliction. The doors of your ancestors flew open at the voice of the stranger; nor were their mansions more illustrious for their exterior beauty, than for the noble hospitality

which illuminated the inside. I am sorry to say, that among the various virtues which an intercourse with our neighbours has produced, hospitality has been neglected; with grief I have beheld the closed portals and rusty hinges of the present race of noblemen, and have observed, that it is now more difficult to get admittance to a baron, than it formerly was to approach a king. Let my countrymen remember, as steel too highly polished becomes brittle, to take care, whilst they emulate the refinements of their neighbours, not to neglect the sterling virtues which have rendered England the admiration of the world. I may, perhaps, appear a little selfish in this advice, since it is decreed, that I am to maintain my present situation, till the generosity of our nobles may render it unnecessary for any man of worth to dine with Duke Humphrey; but it also must be considered, that I now affirm (where falsehood would be useless), that the love of my country is the principle which actuates my conduct, and that the rest are but secondary motives. Should my rhetoric be insufficient to induce the noblemen to make their liberality adequate to their revenues,* I hope it will, at least, have the effect of rendering the

lower orders of mankind more grateful to their benefactor, and cause them to think some sort of civility due to

DUKE HUMPHREY.

THE TRIFLER, No. 36, January 31, 1789.

No. CXXXIII.

O pulchra ista pars quæ actiones vitamque bene formet ac dirigit.

TACITUS.

That institution should be encouraged, which promotes virtue, and educates future members of society.

Sir,

IT has somewhere been observed, that the intrinsic goodness of a cause not unfrequently conceals the weakness of its advocates. To my humble yet honest endeavours, I hope the candour of your readers will apply my confidence in the truth of this remark, as an extenuation of their errors.

I was born in a country town, of poor and reputable parents, and am indebted for my small portion of knowledge to a blue-coat education. Though my veins boast not of noble blood, yet, with modesty, I may claim the praise of gratitude; excited by this strong impulse, I am tempted to expose, by a short narrative of my life, the futility of those observations, which prejudice or malevolence have made against the institution of Sunday schools. In doing this, I shall make no scruple of considering a

Charity or Sunday-school as differing in little else than name; to both, the same arguments are applicable, as both have the diffusion of knowledge as their object; if any difference exists, it is, that the latter has more particularly in view the interests of virtue and the increase of religion.

On my leaving school my friends advised me to hire myself as a servant to a single gentleman, or in a private family: and, in consequence of some favourable recommendation, it was not long before I obtained a situation agreeable to my wishes.

A mercer, his wife, and four children, in London, composed the whole family in which I passed my noviciate year. For a considerable time my expectations of comfort were not deceived, my employment was neither considerable nor difficult, and, as from my childhood I had been bred up in a habit of industry, I experienced nothing either unexpected or intolerable. The maid servant, to whom the children and the cookery had been the only care, and with whom the first sixteen months of my service had elapsed, was dismissed for some trifling offence, and succeeded by another, whose dexterity was quickly the cause of my departure. As my learning had not escaped

unnoticed by my master, he frequently employed me, in the shop, to enter on the books his concerns in trade. Thus situated, it was not extraordinary that the loss of many handkerchiefs, ribbons, &c. should be charged upon me, and that the stronger temptations of my fellow-servant should be overlooked in the more presumptive evidence of my guilt. But it was not in the power of my feelings to bear, with patience, the hints of suspicion, and the questions of hypocrisy. My own conscience was pure; and since I was unwilling to purchase peace of mind by the destruction of another's happiness, which might have happened had I preferred a rash accusation, I bade adieu to the house, and left, with pleasure, a master who looked upon my presence as his greatest misfortune.

I then supported myself on my wages for two months; and, at the end of that time, accepted with joy the offer of an aged antiquarian, to live with him as footman. This was one of the happiest periods of my life; my master, unless when discoursing or questioned on his profession, was unprejudiced, reasonable, and dispassionate. He required but little attendance, and I had, consequently, many opportunities of consulting a library, which, with much

expense and much taste, he had, during his leisure, collected. Four years passed in this manner, and as many more might have passed, had I not, on an unfortunate morning, received with apparent incredulity his assertion, that a great curiosity—a bit of rotten brick—was dug from the ruins of Palmyra.

A widowed lady of fashion, and two daughters, formed the next family into which I had the ill-luck to enter. Dissipation, levity, and vanity, were the least faults of my fair mistresses; an insatiable curiosity, and a love of detraction, were the vices to which most of their attention was directed. Frequently have I been obliged to follow a company from the house, and attend to their conversation, that I might collect materials for the usual scandal of the night. Frequently have I written over, and carried to a newspaper-office, and paid for their insertion, paragraphs, which disunited a happy couple, or joined, in the matrimonial bond, two of opposite tempers and different attachments, which misrepresented an affair of honour, or exaggerated a trifling difference at the card-table, which hinted at the frailty of one old lady, or gave intelligence of the intended elopement of another. In this kind of service it was not likely I should be long em-

ployed; my nature revolted at being accessary to the diffusion of falsehood, and the petty gratification of a contracted malice. I ventured to inform her ladyship, one morning, that if the basest treachery, in the disclosure of surreptitious knowledge, and the most hateful exercise of the pen, in the transcribing of infamous fictions, were the chief duties of my servitude, I must beg leave to quit her house; the consequence was, I was reproached, abused, and dismissed at the moment's warning, without the payment of any wages.

My situation, at this time, was not very enviable; in the midst of a large metropolis I was destitute of friends, money, and employment. An accident at length occurred, which enabled me to support a good character, and retrieve my misfortunes. As I was walking one afternoon along Fleet-street, a gentleman accosted me, whom I immediately recognised to be the mercer, in whose house my first two years of servitude had elapsed. My astonishment at his address gave way to joy, when he informed me that my innocence, since my departure, had appeared by the confession of the fellow-servant, whose dexterity he had always suspected, but the discovery of whose guilt was effected by the vigilance and perspicuity of my successor.

Encouraged by this mark of friendship, I ventured to lay open to him the miserable state of my affairs, and related the cause from which they resulted. He compassionated my bad fortune, but blamed, with no little vehemence, the squeamish weakness of my conscience; and told me, that I should never rise in the world, unless I would submit to the whim of those to whom I was subjected: however, added he, if you will come with me, I will recommend you (as the best recompense for past insults) to an eminent tradesman, who wants an assistant in the compting-house; my experience of your talents and integrity will justify the application. Though the former part of my benefactor's discourse was, in my opinion, somewhat repugnant to strict morality, yet the generosity of the last part fully qualified the utterance of notions which men in business are apt to imbibe in the commerce of the world, and to apply to every opportunity of advice. In answer to his offer, I expressed my thanks in terms the most energetic and expressive. Nor was the industry of my old master less strained or less successful; I was introduced to the tradesman, and my reception was as favourable as my warmest hopes could reasonably suggest. I was accepted after a month's trial, and (whether from good fortune

or merit I leave to your judgment) after the succession of a few years, am, at present, elevated to the situation of chief clerk.

From this narrative of my life, sir, does the ability of reading and writing appear to have operated to my disadvantage? Does it appear to have repressed industry, or nurtured idleness; to have been the occasion of bad fortune, or the means of my present happiness? The answer is conclusive, and tends to evince, at least, the innocency of a good education, as much as the testimony of a single individual can avail.

I am, sir,

Yours,

NICHOLAS NOTABLE.

My correspondent, in the treatment of his subject, has forgot, that the difference between a Charity and a Sunday-school, is greater than he stated it to be. If any arguments of serious weight can be adduced against either, they apply with much greater force to the former than to the latter. It is not to my purpose, at present, to explain how this difference exists, as every one acquainted with the nature of these institutions can best recognise it himself. The object of Sunday-schools is merely the in-

struction of the poor; and surely it is laudable, that those boys, who otherwise would be employed in profane exercises, or sports of cruelty, should, on the Sabbath, attend the church, and be taught the exercise of religion. All mankind have an equal share in what relates to eternal salvation; and I think it not only iniquitous, but unchristian-like, that that class, which is born to worldly poverty, should be prohibited a degree of necessary knowledge on mere political motives. As to the objection, that if those whose occupation should be daily labour, are enabled to read the Bible, they will, like the metaphysicians when Constantinople was taken, instead of attending to the duties of the society, sit debating on controversial opinions, or moral discussions, I look upon it as nugatory and ridiculous. With equal sagacity might it be asserted, that the youth who is destined for a carpenter, and accordingly apprenticed, would employ his time in investigating the abstract properties of matter, and leave the practical part of his profession to those who boasted not of an inquisitorial capacity. But if Sunday-schools should have any other influence on men, than enforcing the observance of the Sabbath, and, consequently, a more rigid execution of moral duty, it will

induce them to despise, with indignation, the hypocritical preaching of methodists, the success of whose endeavours advances in proportion to the ignorance of their auditors. It is, indeed, high time, that England should cast off all occasion for that rational reproach with which its continental neighbours load it, when they speak of the barbarity and prejudices of its lower rank of people.—And, in a country where liberty is indulged, an institution which forces one part of its inhabitants from the shackles of ignorance, which unfolds their privileges both religious and political, and which promotes the ultimate end of society—civilisation should be esteemed with no common regard, and patronised with no common ardour.

THE TRIFLER, No. 32, January 3, 1789.

No. CXXXIV.

Οςις δε διαβολιαις πειθεται ταχυ,
Ητοι πονηρος αυτος εςι της τροπης,
Η παντατασι παιδαριυ γνωμην εχει.

MENANDER.

He who willingly extends his credulity to the belief of calumnies, is a wicked man or fool.

THAT sacred weapon, satire, so seldom falls into hands able to wield it with fortitude and discretion, that if we examine the characters of those who have arrogated to themselves the office of stigmatising vice, the result of our labours will oftentimes prove disappointment and regret.

Yet, as not every disappointment is without some useful lesson, it may not, perhaps, be quite unprofitable to offer a few cursory remarks upon some of those writers who have passed through the world under the denomination of satirists.

To fix a period from which satire may be supposed to have had its beginning, is to date the origin of that whose existence is coeval with the nature of man. The manners of all times have furnished materials for the pen of the satirist; and writers of all nations have dis-

covered either their integrity in the proper use of it, or their malevolence in the prostitution of it. That Homer gave sufficient proofs of his abilities to become a powerful satirist, we have heard in his Margites, and we have seen in his character of Thersites.

The different regulations of the Greek comedy have been accurately and frequently stated to us; it is, therefore, unnecessary to give a very minute account of what every one is, or may be, so minutely acquainted with.—In consequence of the licentious satire produced into public by Cratinus and Eupolis, it was decreed that no one should name another on the stage. Under these restrictions wrote Menander and Philemon; with the chastity of whose style, and the purity of whose sentiments, we have reason to lament that we cannot be more intimately acquainted. To them succeeded Aristophanes, upon whom his biographical panegyrist has been able to heap no other commendation, than such as is due to the misapplication of abilities which might have been serviceable to his country, and creditable to himself.

Let the reader of Aristophanes divest himself of his inclination to become acquainted with the customs of the Greeks, and the niceties of their language, and he will find little in that

author tending to make him a wiser or a better man. While ribaldry is considered as the perfection of wit, so long shall we look for a model in Aristophanes: while the malicious exercise of superior abilities be commendable, so long shall Aristophanes be commended. The humour of this writer is generally low, and frequently obscene; his ridicule, from being misapplied, rather disgusts his reader, than vilifies his object; and that odium, which, in the wickedness of his heart, he would heap upon another, falls with justice upon himself. When we consider the reputed elegance, even to a proverb, of the Athenians, it is not without astonishment that we mark the consequence of his plays; scarce less than infatuation seems to have actuated the minds of his audience. By means of his worthless ribaldry, the finger of scorn was pointed against Æschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles; and to his too efficacious calumny, Socrates paid the tribute of his life. Plutarch, in his comparison between Aristophanes and Menander, observes of the former, "that his language is tumid, full of stage-trick and illiberality, which is never the case with Menander. The man of science is offended, and vulgarity delighted. He, however, obtained popularity by exercising his wit against the tax-

gatherers; he is remarkable (adds he) for having so distributed his speeches, that there is no difference whether a father speaks, or a son, a rustic or a deity, an old man or a hero. In Menander it is directly opposite." But the violence with which Plutarch condemns the writings of Aristophanes may discover that his judgment was somewhat biassed by his indignation against the author. Thus far, however, on all sides, will be readily granted, that could the fate of Menander and Aristophanes have been reversed, it is probable, comedy would have found a standard of taste instead of a precedent for licentiousness, and, using such example, would have proved herself the mirror of truth, instead of the vehicle of calumny. The reader who has discretion enough to look upon Aristophanes as the skilful advocate in a bad cause, may be entertained by his writings, and not prejudiced by his opinions. But we are too apt to subscribe, without examination, to the dictates of acknowledged abilities:—there is little trouble in this, but much danger.

Of the Roman satirists we may speak more favourably than, perhaps, of any set of writers, who have adorned any country. The habits of their lives, in general, gave a sanction to the gravity of their doctrines. The conduct of

Plautus was no disgrace to his writings; Lucilius gave no precepts of virtue to others, which he did not exemplify in himself; and to that best writer of the most accomplished age, Horace, who shall deny the meed of praise, which the testimony of his own times declared his due, and the universal consent of succeeding ages has ratified and confirmed? Equal to him in strength of mind, and in virtue by no means inferior, were Juvenal and Persius; yet they had not that art and judgment, the possession of which has made Horace more read and admired, and the want of which has made themselves more neglected.

The policy of the Gauls, and the terrors of the Bastile, have, no doubt, while they curbed the licentiousness of a gay and lively nation, at the same time depressed the ardour of many ingenious satirists. That this has been the case, the world has little cause to lament, since the few who have discovered themselves in that country, seem rather desirous of establishing a reputation for themselves, than zealous for the promotion of virtue. They are content to be called good writers, without ambition to be accounted virtuous men.

In order to review some of the best satirists of our own nation, we must pass over the bigotry of one age, in which Milton seems to

have presided, and the profligacy of another, in which this land exchanged the horrors of civil war, and intestine discords, for the vicious luxuries of an ill-spent peace, which were ratified by the countenance, encouragement, and example of a king, The wits of this age were consistent in their lives and writings, and immorality was the characteristic of both. They seem to have agreed, as it were, with universal consent, that, "a tale of humour was sufficient knowledge, good-fellowship sufficient honesty," and a restraint from the extremes of vice, sufficient virtue.

If we descend to what has been called the Augustan age of English literature, we shall find the satirical works of that time will not bear a very near inspection. It is a lamentable truth, that the same pen which had been so often and so successfully employed in the cause of virtue, which had given immortality to the Man of Ross, and the compliment of truth to Addison, was unwarily led into an attempt to pluck the laurels from the brow of Bentley, and to gratify an unmanly malevolence in the publication of the Dunciad.

The censures of Swift seem to have been marked by habitual ill-nature; and the compliments of Young, by an habitual want of discrimination. And it generally happens, that the

censures of such satirists, and the commendations of such panegyrists, keep an equal balance; both weighing--nothing.

Nothing has, I believe, been more frequently an object of ill-placed ridicule than learning, which, before it can appear ridiculous, must be misnamed pedantry. Every Homer has his Zoilus; and every Zoilus, like Homer's, is remembered only to be despised. Whatever effect the attacks of Aristophanes upon the tragedians of his day might have toward vitiating the taste of his countrymen, posterity have seemed willing to do justice to those works, in the admiration of which the wisest and best men of all ages have united.

I am inclined to believe, that the learning of Dr. Bentley lost no admirers from the attacks of Pope, or the insinuations of Swift; and an instance, taken from times nearer our own, will, perhaps, place the odium of malevolent satire in a stronger light. To the truth of this every one can bear witness, who is acquainted with those attacks which have been made by Churchill and others upon Johnson. That great writer—who, as he was a man, could not but err, and, as he was a wise man, could not persist in error; who was no feeble or time-serving moralist, but the firm and systematic teacher and practiser of

virtue: he has shewn us, that the shafts of malevolence may be turned aside, however keenly pointed, or however deeply empoisoned. The reader of Lexiphanes is excited to laugh without approbation; and the attack of Churchill remains a melancholy instance of prostituted wit. What shall we say of those, who, offended by no public and growing vice, provoked by no private wrongs, in deliberate wantonness, sport with the characters of their neighbours, whom they hold out to unjust ridicule, and unmerited reproach? It is but a weak apology for the baseness of their hearts, that the produce of their pens may afford amusement to the idle, and gratification to the malevolent. But our reflections upon this subject will be too applicable to many of those publications which are the disgrace and entertainment of the times in which we live.—In the commendation of such men, let all those join, who have learnt, from the writings of Shaftesbury, that ridicule is the test of truth; or from the conduct of Voltaire, that calumny is a cardinal virtue.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 21, August 4, 1787.

"To call back the powers of the mind from idle speculation, and direct them to more applicable labours, the force of ridicule has been successfully employed. Bergerac led the way in France in this species of satire, which Swift, in some parts of

his Gulliver, has improved into such exquisite keenness of humour. One of the first English pieces of this kind, a book now almost forgotten, was given to the world by the author who boasts the introduction of English satirical poetry, under the name of Mundus Alter et Idem. The folly and impertinence of learning ill-directed and abused, have been severely exposed in a fictitious history of an infatuated man of learning, by Arbuthnot and his friends. The sequel of the history, which in their hands was interrupted, has furnished matter for a mock epic poem, which ranks among the first of those compositions.

"To the extirpation of prejudices, however rooted and national, satire has sometimes been found adequate. The poem of Hudibras is known to have had a sensible effect in putting to flight the absurdities which fanaticism and hypocrisy had spread over the nation; and in the midst of a period, when a universal fury seemed dispersed among the whole Spanish nation, an ingenious satire was able to infuse a new turn of thinking. Reason and humanity in vain opposed themselves to the barbarous prejudices which the depraved ideas of honour and gallantry had produced; but we see the giant of false glory, who had so long bathed himself in the best blood of a nation, fall before the keenness of solemn irony. Cervantes wielded the arm of ridicule against the universal prepossession, and from the time of the reception of his inimitable work, is nearly dated the beginning of a gradual extinction to those illusions which had reigned in the heated imaginations of a whole people, and desolated a country of heroes. Such is the universal application and efficacy of satire, when undebased by rancour and malignity, and under the guidance of justice, without which neither the charms of wit nor energy of language can keep off contempt from the prostituted minister of calumny. There is, unfortunately, too often, a mean principle inherent in the human breast, which is gratified by the exposure of a character, or detraction from known virtue; but it is above considerations like these, that true and genuine satire ever soars. The rage of party, the rancour of personality,

the bitterness of malice, however dignified by wit, or pointed by ridicule, exist but for the day which bears them; while a boldness in the cause of virtue, a generous indignation against vice, an acuteness and perseverance displayed in tracing guilt and folly through all their subterfuges, will give dignity and permanence to the honest endeavours of the good satirist; and, when the facts he stigmatises are forgotten and perished, will still be able to hand him down to the admiration and respect of succeeding ages."

SPECULATOR, No. 26.

No. CXXXV.

Hæ nugæ seria ducent
In mala.

HORAT.

——— Trifles such as these
To serious mischiefs lead.

FRANCIS.

Sir,

I LABOUR under a species of distress, which I fear will at length drive me utterly from that society in which I am most ambitious to appear; but I will give you a short sketch of my origin and present situation, by which you will be enabled to judge of my difficulties.

My father was a farmer of no great property, and with no other learning than what he had acquired at a charity-school; but, my mother being dead, and I an only child, he determined to give me that advantage, which he fancied would make him happy; viz. a learned education.—I was sent to a country grammar-school, and from thence to the University, with a view of qualifying for holy orders. Here, having but small allowance from my father, and being naturally of a timid and bashful disposition, I had no opportunity of rubbing off that native awkwardness, which is the fatal cause of all my un-

happiness, and which I now begin to fear can never be amended. You must know, that in my person I am tall and thin, with a fair complexion, and light flaxen hair; but of such extreme susceptibility of shame, that on the smallest subject of confusion, my blood all rushes into my cheeks, and I appear a perfect full-blown rose. The consciousness of this unhappy failing made me avoid society, and I became enamoured of a college life; particularly when I reflected, that the uncouth manners of my father's family were little calculated to improve my outward conduct. I, therefore, had resolved on living at the University and taking pupils, when two unexpected events greatly altered the posture of my affairs; viz. my father's death, and the arrival of an uncle from the Indies.

This uncle I had very rarely heard my father mention, and it was generally believed that he was long since dead, when he arrived in England only a week too late to close his brother's eyes. I am ashamed to confess, what I believe has been often experienced by those whose education has been better than their parents, that my poor father's ignorance, and vulgar language, had often made me blush to think I was his son; and at his death I was not inconsolable for the loss of that, which I was not unfrequently

ashamed to own. My uncle was but little affected, for he had been separated from his brother more than thirty years, and, in that time, he had acquired a fortune which, he used to brag, would make a nabob happy; in short, he had brought over with him the enormous sum of thirty thousand pounds, and upon this he built his hopes of never-ending happiness. While he was planning schemes of greatness and delight, whether the change of climate might affect him, or what other cause I know not, but he was snatched from all his dreams of joy by a short illness, of which he died, leaving me heir to all his property. And now, sir, behold me, at the age of twenty-five, well stocked with Latin, Greek, and Mathematics, possessed of an ample fortune, but so awkward and unversed in every gentleman-like accomplishment, that I am pointed at by all who see me, as "the wealthy learned clown."

I have lately purchased an estate in the country, which abounds in (what is called) a fashionable neighbourhood; and when you reflect on my parentage and uncouth manner, you will hardly think how much my company is courted by the surrounding families, especially by those who have marriageable daughters: from these gentlemen I have received familiar calls, and the

most pressing invitations, and, though I wished to accept their offered friendship, I have repeatedly excused myself under the pretence of not being quite settled; for the truth is, that when I have rode, or walked, with a full intention to return their several visits, my heart has failed me as I approached their gates, and I have frequently returned homeward, resolving to try again to-morrow.

However, I at length determined to conquer my timidity, and, three days ago, accepted of an invitation to dine this day with one, whose open easy manner left me no room to doubt a cordial welcome. Sir Thomas Friendly, who lives about two miles distant, is a baronet, with about two thousand pounds a year estate, joining to that I purchased; he has two sons, and five daughters, all grown up and living with their mother and a maiden sister of Sir Thomas's at Friendly-Hall, dependant on their father. Conscious of my unpolished gait, I have, for some time past, taken private lessons of a professor, who teaches "grown gentlemen to dance;" and though I, at first, found wondrous difficulty in the art he taught, my knowledge of the mathematics was of prodigious use, in teaching me the equilibrium of my body, and the due adjust-

ment of the centre of gravity to the five positions. Having now acquired the art of walking without tottering, and learned to make a bow, I boldly ventured to obey the baronet's invitation to a family dinner, not doubting but my new acquirements would enable me to see the ladies with tolerable intrepidity: but alas! how vain are all the hopes of theory, when unsupported by habitual practice. As I approached the house, a dinner bell alarmed my fears, lest I had spoiled the dinner by want of punctuality; impressed with this idea, I blushed the deepest crimson, as my name was repeatedly announced by the several livery servants, who ushered me into the library, hardly knowing what or whom I saw; at my first entrance, I summoned all my fortitude, and made my new-learned bow to Lady Friendly; but, unfortunately, in bringing back my left foot to the third position, I trode upon the gouty toe of poor Sir Thomas, who had followed close at my heels, to be the nomenclator of the family. The confusion this occasioned in me, is hardly to be conceived, since none but bashful men can judge of my distress, and of that description the number I believe is very small. The baronet's politeness by degrees dissipated my concern, and I was astonished to

see how far good breeding could enable him to suppress his feelings, and to appear with perfect ease after so painful an accident.

The cheerfulness of her ladyship, and the familiar chat of the young ladies, insensibly led me to throw off my reserve and sheepishness, till, at length, I ventured to join in conversation, and even to start fresh subjects. The library being richly furnished with books in elegant bindings, I conceived Sir Thomas to be a man of literature, and ventured to give my opinion concerning the several editions of the Greek classics, in which the baronet's opinion exactly coincided with my own. To this subject I was led, by observing an edition of Xenophon in sixteen volumes, which (as I had never before heard of such a thing) greatly excited my curiosity, and I rose up to examine what it could be: Sir Thomas saw what I was about, and (as I suppose) willing to save me trouble, rose to take down the book, which made me more eager to prevent him, and, hastily laying my hand on the first volume, I pulled it forcibly; but lo! instead of books, a board, which by leather and gilding had been made to look like sixteen volumes, came tumbling down and unluckily pitched upon a Wedgewood inkstand on the table under it. In vain did Sir Thomas as-

sure me, there was no harm done; I saw the ink streaming from an inlaid table on the Turkey carpet, and, scarce knowing what I did, attempted to stop its progress with my cambrick handkerchief. In the height of this confusion we were informed that dinner was served up, and I with joy perceived that the bell, which at first had so alarmed my fears, was only the half-hour dinner-bell.

In walking through the hall and suite of apartments to the dining-room, I had time to collect my scattered senses, and was desired to take my seat betwixt Lady Friendly and her eldest daughter at the table. Since the fall of the wooden Xenophon, my face had been continually burning like a fire-brand; and I was just beginning to recover myself, and to feel comfortably cool, when an unlooked-for accident rekindled all my heat and blushes. Having set my plate of soup too near the edge of the table, in bowing to Miss Dinah, who politely complimented the pattern of my waistcoat, I tumbled the whole scalding contents into my lap. In spite of an immediate supply of napkins to wipe the surface of my clothes, my black silk breeches were not stout enough to save me from the painful effects of this sudden fomentation, and, for some minutes, my legs and thighs

seemed stewing in a boiling caldron; but recollecting how Sir Thomas had disguised his torture, when I trode upon his toe, I firmly bore my pain in silence, and sat with my lower extremities parboiled, amidst the stifled giggling of the ladies and servants.

I will not relate the several blunders which I made during the first course, or the distress occasioned by my being desired to carve a fowl, or help to various dishes that stood near me, spilling a sauce-boat, and knocking down a salt-seller; rather let me hasten to the second course, "where fresh disasters overwhelmed me quite."

I had a piece of rich sweet pudding on my fork, when Miss Louisa Friendly begged to trouble me for a pigeon that stood near me; in my haste, scarcely knowing what I did, I whipped the pudding into my mouth, hot as a burning coal; it was impossible to conceal my agony, my eyes were starting from their sockets. At last, in spite of shame and resolution, I was obliged to drop the cause of my torment on my plate. Sir Thomas and the ladies all compassionated my misfortune, and each advised a different application; one recommended oil, another water, but all agreed that wine was best for drawing out the fire; and a glass of sherry

was brought me from the sideboard, which I snatched up with eagerness; but, oh! how shall I tell the sequel? whether the butler, by accident, mistook, or purposely designed to drive me mad, he gave me the strongest brandy, with which I filled my mouth, already flayed and blistered; totally unused to every kind of ardent spirits, with my tongue, throat, and palate, as raw as beef, what could I do? I could not swallow, and, clapping my hands upon my mouth, the cursed liquor squirted through my nose and fingers like a fountain over all the dishes; and I was crushed by bursts of laughter from all quarters. In vain did Sir Thomas reprimand the servants, and Lady Friendly chide her daughters; for the measure of my shame and their diversion was not yet complete. To relieve me from the intolerable state of perspiration which this accident had caused, without considering what I did, I wiped my face with that ill-fated handkerchief, which was still wet from the consequences of the fall of Xenophon, and covered all my features with strokes of ink in every direction. The baronet himself could not support this shock, but joined his lady in the general laugh; while I sprung from the table in despair, rushed out of the house, and ran home in an agony of confusion and dis-

grace, which the most poignant sense of guilt could not have excited.

Thus, without having deviated from the path of moral rectitude, I am suffering torments like a "goblin damn'd." The lower half of me has been almost boiled, my tongue and mouth grilled, and I bear the mark of Cain upon my forehead; yet these are trifling considerations, to the everlasting shame which I must feel whenever this adventure shall be mentioned; perhaps, by your assistance, when my neighbours know how much I feel on the occasion, they will spare a bashful man, and (as I am just informed my poultice is ready) I trust you will excuse the haste in which I subscribe myself,

Yours, &c.

MONGRELL MORELL.

VARIETY, No. 22.

No. CXXXVI.

Τυμβῳ τε ϛηλῃ τε, το γαρ γερας εϛι θανοντων.
HOMER.

What honours mortals after death receive,
Those unavailing honours we may give.
POPE.

THAT Fame is the universal passion, is by nothing more conspicuously discovered than by epitaphs. The generality of mankind are not content to sink ingloriously into the grave, but wish to be paid that tribute of panegyrick after their deaths, which, in many cases, may not be due to the virtues of their lives. If the vanity of the departed has not been provident of monumental honours, the partiality of friends is eager to supply them. Death may be said, with almost equal propriety, to confer as well as to level all distinctions. In consequence of that event, a kind of chemical operation takes place; for those characters which were mixed with the gross particles of vice, by being thrown into the alembic of flattery, are sublimated into the essence of virtue. He who, during the performance of his part upon the stage of the world, was weakly applauded, after the close of the

drama, is pourtrayed as the favourite of "every virtue under heaven." To save the opulent from oblivion, the sculptor unites his labours with the scholar or the poet, whilst the rustic is indebted for his mite of posthumous renown to the carpenter, the painter, or the mason. The structures of fame are in both cases built with materials whose duration is short. It may check the sallies of pride to reflect on the mortality of man; but for its complete humiliation let it be remembered, that epitaphs and monuments decay. Had not Cicero been assisted by his memory, he could never have deciphered the mutilated verses on the tomb of Archimedes. The antiquarian searches in vain for the original inscriptions on Chaucer and Sidney.

The observations of the illustrious Johnson on epitaphs are marked with acuteness as well as extent of judgment. In his criticisms, however, on those of Pope, he has shewn a petulance of temper and fastidiousness of taste, at the same time that he acknowledged the barrenness of Pope's topics, and the difficulty of distributing to numbers that praise which is particular and characteristic. He who is a critic should consider, that, according to the natural progress of human opinions, he may become the subject of criticism. If Johnson had ever conjectured

that he must one day be tried by his own laws, more lenity would probably have been shown to Pope. The doctor remarks, "that an epitaph ought not to be longer than common beholders have leisure and patience to peruse." Of the few he has left behind him, that on Hanmer is surely objectionable for its prolixity. He reprobates with just severity any allusions to classical customs, and the situation of Roman tombs. The lines of Passeratius on Henry of France are quoted, to show the impropriety of addressing the reader as a traveller; yet the doctor forgot his strictures and his quotation when he concluded his character of Thrale with "Abi, viator."

The preceding remarks are intended as an introduction to a plan which I take this opportunity of laying before the public. It is my design to publish a collection of the most remarkable epitaphs, with critical observations. Particular attention will be paid to their arrangement, of which it shall be the object of the remaining part of this paper to exhibit an exact specimen. Without spinning too many threads of classification, a few striking and general distinctions only shall be adopted. The learned—the sublime—the characteristic—the complimentary. The first class is intended to allure

the scholars of our famous universities to subscribe liberally to the work. To let the reader into a secret, it was originally my design to have published this part in a folio by itself, with a pompous dedication. Happening to see a goose singed with the leaf of the Pietas Oxoniensis, I was frightened from the prosecution of my plan by so unlucky an omen. My intended work will notwithstanding comprise learning enough to satisfy the appetite of a reasonable linguist. There will be no room for complaint if I begin with Persian, and end with Latin. The first epitaph shall be that on Hadgi Shaughsware, in Saint Botolph's, Bishopgate; and the last shall be the laconic Fui Caius, at Cambridge.

Under this head many ingenious and novel opinions will be advanced relative to the language as well as the sentiments of these compositions. It will be proved to a demonstration, that the learned languages are absurdly used except for learned men. Some one has well observed, that, if the dead could hear their own sepulchral praise, they would be put to the blush. Some, without doubt, would with amiable diffidence adopt the elegant sentiments of Frontinus, "Impensa monumenti supervacua est; memoria nostri durabit, si vitâ meruimus." "Superfluous is the expense of the tomb, since

our memory will flourish, if our conduct has merited that honour."—But multitudes must be insensible to the emotions of shame, unless they were endued with the gift of tongues. The moral design of an epitaph is to inspire an emulation of the virtues of the deceased. This cannot be effected, unless the language which records those virtues be intelligible to persons who are in a situation to emulate them. The talents and munificence of Busby and South are transmitted to scholars by a vehicle which is familiar to them: but how can the ladies improve by the example of the beautiful Mrs. Arundel, who is celebrated in a Latin inscription in Saint Mary's, Oxford? or how is the courage of our sailors likely to be increased by the Ciceronian periods on Rooke at Canterbury?

The Sublime.—This species is confined to those who occupy the most distinguished niches in the Temple of Fame. Simplicity and brevity are its characteristics: such names as Bacon, Locke, and Newton, want not the flowers of eloquence, or the parade of periods, to decorate their monuments. The tomb of Sir Christopher Wren has a local propriety from his being buried in St. Paul's, which gave birth to an inscription worthy of that illustrious restorer of Attic architecture: "Subtus conditur hujus ecclesiæ

et urbis conditor, qui vixit annos ultra nonaginta, non sibi sed bono publico. Lector, si monumentum requiris, circumspice."

The Characteristic.—A class which far excels all the rest, as it contains examples of splendid talents and eminent virtues marked with peculiar and appropriate praise. Not only those epitaphs wherein their due measure of applause is distributed, with nice discrimination, to philosophers, poets, warriors, and statesmen, will be introduced under this head, but such likewise as have preserved the lowly and ignoble. These compositions are as difficult to be met with as accurate miniatures. Dr. Johnson would have said that Pope's verses on Mrs. Corbet were a very proper exemplification of this species. Perhaps the following by Hawkesworth, in Bromley church-yard, is by no means inferior to it:

"Near this place lies the body of Elizabeth Monk, aged 101, the wife of John Monk, blacksmith, by whom she had no children. But virtue would not suffer her to be childless. An infant, to whom and to whose father and uncle she had been nurse, became dependant upon strangers for the necessaries of life; to him she afforded the protection of a mother. This parental charity was returned with filial affection; and she was supported, in the feebleness of age,

by him whom she had cherished in the helplessness of infancy. Let it be remembered, that there is no station in which industry will not obtain power to be liberal, nor any character on which liberality will not confer honour. She had long been prepared by a simple and unaffected piety for her end. To preserve the memory of this person, but yet more to perpetuate the lesson of her life, this stone was erected by voluntary contribution."

The Complimentary.—This article comprises inscriptions in which the dead are more indebted for their praise to invention than to merit. The writers of epitaphs ought to be historians, and not poets.

Their panegyric often fatigues with prolixity, and disgusts with fulsomeness. Take away the dates from complimentary epitaphs, and they have all the appearance of dedications. They exhibit the demigods of the golden age, or the immaculate heroes of romance. Like Addison's Cato, they seem to have been out of the reach of human passions or infirmities—of a nature too much exalted to excite pity, and famed for excellences too transcendent for imitation. Sometimes, however, it happens, that common topics of encomium are touched with so masterly a hand, that they charm with an irresistible grace,

and have all the force of novelty. For a panegyrist to declare, that a lady is deserving of the highest praise—that she is as beautiful as an angel—and that she is remarkable for uniform piety—seems as if he could not strike out of the beaten track.—But surely it is out of the power of a vulgar bard to pourtray such ideas in the following manner:

ON LADY CATHERINE PASTON,

Paston Church, Norfolk, 1628.

Can man be silent and not praises find,
For her who lived the praise of woman-kind?
Whose outward frame was lent the world to guess,
What shapes our souls shall wear in happiness;
Whose virtue did all ill so oversway,
That her whole life was a communion-day.

As my publication will be extended only to those epitaphs which are really inscribed on tomb-stones, the ludicrous and the gay will of course be omitted. Let him whose inclinations may lead him to peruse such, be referred to magazines and jest-books. He will there find that epigram, pun, satire, and burlesque, have attempted to throw a gleam of levity upon a subject which is too awful to be made ridiculous. Wit and humour never more mistake their

object, than when they aim their shafts at man in a state of dissolution. But, however wanton and injudicious their sallies have been, they have never profaned the sanctity of Christian temples by affixing their productions to them. Such an indecorum militates too strongly against piety and sensibility, to be tolerated with patience. To sport with the characters of the departed is a sufficient triumph for gaiety, without being permitted to erect a trophy over their graves.

The perusal of epitaphs is not to be considered as a frivolous and light amusement. If such only be the objects of attention as have been noticed with our applause, it is unquestionably an introduction to pleasing knowledge, and an incentive to moral improvement. What biography is to history, an epitaph is to biography. It is a sketch which marks the great outlines of character, and excites curiosity to view the portraits as painted on the pages of history. It is likewise an epitome of a sermon, which teaches the most useful truths in the most comprehensive form. Monumental inscriptions remind us that time is on the wing,—that every rank and age must fall a prey to his depredations,—that the moments of life are too pre-

cious to be squandered away on trifles,—that religion is the only support againt the horrors of death, and the only guide to the joys of eternity.

THE OLLA PODRIDA, No. 39, Dec. 8, 1787.

No. CXXXVII.

Sed, dum abest, quod avemus, id exsuperare videtur
Cætera; post aliud, quum contigit illud, avemus.

LUCRETIUS.

The bliss we covet seems, at distant view,
To all superior; but, when once possest,
It cloys, we spurn it, and another call.

GOOD.

THAT the happiness of life consists rather in expectation than enjoyment, has been so frequently advanced, and so ably supported, by writers of former ages, and so often repeated by those of our own times, that it should seem impossible to urge any thing new on so trite a subject; yet, perhaps, the elucidation of a well-known fact may produce variety where novelty ought not to be expected; particularly, if the examples be addressed to those who may never before have seen the object placed in a light adapted to their pursuits.

The man of business has little leisure to peruse the speculations of essayists; and, if he had, no arguments would prove sufficient to convince him, that when he shall have attained the object for which he daily toils, he will at length find happiness elude his embrace, and often at

the moment when he fancies he has reached her. Such a man will tell you of the joy which rest from unremitting labour will afford; he will talk of the fatigue of business, anxious days, and sleepless nights; and he will think it madness to suppose, that some years hence (when he shall have acquired the fortune that his hopes have promised) he shall not enjoy happiness, which seems so intimately combined with affluence and ease. I will allow, that the prospect of this distant hope is sufficient to excite his utmost industry to possess the promised good; but let him beware how he quits that industry when he thinks he has no longer need of it; let him reflect, that life without employment can never bring him happiness. No human being, however exalted may be his rank and fortune, however enlarged and cultivated his understanding, can long be happy, without some object of pursuit. Life is a ladder on which we climb from hope to hope, and by expectation strive to ascend to enjoyment; but he is miserable indeed, who fancies he has reached his highest hope, or who enjoys the utmost of his wishes; for those who have been most successful in their respective undertakings, have given the gloomiest description of the emptiness of human pleasures. The pursuit alone can yield true happiness; and

I affirm, that the most trifling object that has power to fascinate the hopes of man, is worthy his attention. The money-getting trader looks with astonishment at the man of fortune, who neglects the palace of his ancestors, to visit foreign nations, without those views which induce the merchant to correspond with distant countries; and thinks that, were he but possessed of such a family estate, England alone would satisfy his range of happiness; but when we talk of what would make us happy, we always talk of what is not in our possession; and though mankind will sometimes boast of satisfaction, which they know they do not feel; yet it is on the prospect of some future good, that they truly dwell with rapture.

Though the man of business may not allow the truth of what I have asserted, the scholar and philosopher will say it is a fact so evident, and so well established, that it is almost as absurd to go about to prove it, as it would be to demonstrate that the sun gives light and heat: yet there is a middle class betwixt the busy and the studious, betwixt the man who speculates with thought too much, and him who never thinks but to get money; I mean the leisure country gentleman, who hunts, or shoots, or fishes, as the seasons or the weather tempt; and

who reads sometimes, because he can do nothing else for his amusement. To him I shall address the remainder of this paper; for he only can judge how truly I describe his feelings.

In a warm summer's evening, look at the patient angler, his eye intently fixed upon a floating quill; a little gust of wind deceives his sight, or his hand shakes the line and causes an undulating motion of the cork; his heart bounds with transitory joy: but all is still again, and expectation gives a joy more calm; many minutes now elapse in silent watchfulness; at length his patience is no longer kept in suspense; the float, with frequent jerks, is snatched below the surface of the flood; he feels the tremulous motion in his hand, and pleasure thrills through all his frame; anxiety and hope, but not unmixed with fear, engross his whole attention, and cautiously he drags the struggling victim to the light; here, when he views the unexpected magnitude of his glittering prize, his joy is at its utmost reach; what object could at this moment tempt him to quit his station? Intent upon his sport, he one moment pulls, then seems to yield, then gently draws the exhausted victim, till, at length, exulting, he takes the scaly prisoner in his hand; but, alas! with his victory

his pleasure ceases; for having disentangled the poor creature from his hook, he throws it down with indifference, and proceeds to fish again, that he may again enjoy the pleasure of anxious expectation.

It is with peculiar propriety that I consider the happiness of the sportsman, since I write this from my friend Aimwell's seat in B——shire, where the season of the year and the necessity of exercise, with a love of conformity, have led me to partake in the delights and fatigues of shooting; and as I am not every day so employed, I could not help attending to my sensations during a walk of many hours and miles this morning: these I shall endeavour minutely to decribe.

We rose and breakfasted an hour or two before the usual time, that we might find our game at feed upon the stubbles; a cloudy morning, with a brisk wind that dried the dew, and gave the dogs every advantage of the scent, communicated cheerfulness and vigour to our undertaking; hardly have we mounted the first style and stepped into the barley stubble, but, Toho! old Sancho stands, Fop backs him staunchly; before hope can fully ripen into joy, young Carlo dashes in, and the young covey flies into a distant field of new-cut clover, and there we

mark down every bird; here is no time for disappointment; young Carlo is secured, and taken into couples by the servant, and we step forward with eager strides to the object of our hopes; after walking briskly down the hill, and having toiled across the valley, just as we reach the corner of the field, panting with certainty of the falling on our prey, the birds, with one consent, mount into the air only a few yards' distance out of gunshot, and return into the hedge of the same stubble-field from whence they were originally driven. Now hope suggests, that being in the covert of the hedge, the partridges will rise one at a time and yield us glorious sport. Full of this idea we return with redoubled ardour the same way by which we came; and though we now ascend at every step, the way seems shorter in proportion to our prospect of success. At length, behold us on opposite sides of the hedge in which we know our game is lodged; Sancho is on 'em! Fop winds 'em too! and now, with that palpitation which only a keen sportsman can comprehend, we gently beat the bush; and forth, from either side, part of the covey rushes. My friend (who seldom misses a fair shot) kills his bird. But I, whether from too much eagerness, or too little practice, shoot

behind the mark; and plainly discover, the moment I have fired, why I have not succeeded; but there is no time for recollection, much less for disappointment; for there are more birds left. Sancho is stiffened at the hedge, a few yards distant. In extreme haste my gun is charged again, and I move on with pleasing trepidation: the partridge whirrs from the pointer's nose, and I take more certain aim; but, drawing the trigger, I discover, that, in my haste, I had forgot to prime. Now with my eyes only I pursue the happy fugitives; and this so occupies my thoughts, that disappointment cannot find admittance; besides, I exult in the reflection, that had my piece gone off I should most certainly have killed my bird; and, while I am engaged in exultation, and in priming, the remainder of the covey takes wing, and points the direction we must follow. We now proceed beating each field with unrelaxing diligence: we try swathe oats, or wheat, or barley-stubble, then look the clover; or turnips are more likely: in short, each piece of land we enter, gives fresh hopes: we are sure they must be there; but having beat this field and that, in vain, we have better founded hope of finding in the next adjoining; nor does expectation droop beneath

repeated disappointment; at length the dogs are certain in the turnips, and we approach with ardour heightened by delay; 'tis now a sportsman only can relish what I feel; the dogs stand immoveable as blocks of stone, and the heart beats with rapture at the approaching moment; while I cautiously examine whether I have primed or not. At length a partridge rises with rustling noise, and spreads his wings; my well-aimed gun quickly stops him in his flight, and kills him on the spot. This is the moment which a novice in the field would think the highest pitch of joy; but he is mistaken; the pleasure ceases with the victory; the lifeless animal is negligently thrown into the bag, and all the eagerness of hasty charging is repeated, lest other birds should rise while I am unprepared. Thus the happiness of sporting, like that of every other object, is more in expectation than enjoyment; and, having confined my illustration to the country gentlemen or sportsmen, let none who never drew a trigger at a partridge, presume to judge of ecstasies which they may think overrated; but let them remember that energy, even in trifles, is necessary to constitute felicity in active minds; and that he who seeks happiness with indifference

in any pursuit of life, will never find it; he must be in earnest, whatever he undertakes; and, "What he does, he must do heartily."

VARIETY, No. 6.

No. CXXXVIII.

Ye holy towers that shade the "Alpine" steep,
  Long may ye rear your aged brows sublime,
  Though, hurrying silent by, relentless time
Assail you, and the winter whirlwinds sweep!

For, far from blazing grandeur's crowded halls,
  Here Charity hath fixed her chosen seat,
  Oft list'ning tearful when the wild winds beat,
With hollow bodings, round your ancient walls;

And Pity, at the dark and stormy hour
  Of midnight, when the moon is hid on high,
Keeps her lone watch upon the topmost tow'r,
  And turns her ear to each expiring cry;
Blest if her aid some fainting wretch might save,
And snatch him cold and speechless from the "grave."

BOWLES.

In several convents situated among the mountains which divide France from Italy, a custom prevails that does honour to human nature: in these sequestered cloisters, which are often placed in the most uninhabited parts of the Alps, strangers and travellers are not only hospitably entertained; but a breed of dogs are trained to go in search of wanderers, and are every morning sent from the convents with an apparatus fastened to their collars, containing some refreshment, and a direction to travellers to follow the sagacious animal: many lives are by this means preserved in this wild romantic

country. During my last visit to the South of France, I made a trip into this mountainous region; and at the convent of * * *, where I was at first induced to prolong my stay by the majestic scenery of its environs; as that became familiar, I was still more forcibly detained by the amiable manners of the reverend father, who was at that time Superior of that monastery: from him I received the following pathetic narrative, which I shall deliver, as nearly as I can recollect, in his own words:

"About twenty years ago (said the venerable old man), I was then in the fifty-seventh year of my age, and second of my priority over this house, a most singular event happened through the sagacity of one of these dogs, to which I became myself a witness. No more than a dozen leagues from hence, there lived a wealthy gentleman, the father of Matilda, who was his only child, and whose history I am going to relate. In the same village lived also Albert, a youth possessed of all the world deems excellent in man, except one single article, which was the only object of regard in the eyes of Matilda's father. Albert, with a graceful person, cultivated mind, elegance of manners, and captivating sweetness of disposition, was poor in fortune; and Matilda's father

was blind to every other consideration; blind to his daughter's real happiness, and a stranger to the soul-delighting sensation of raising worth and genius, depressed by poverty, to affluence and independence. Therefore, on Matilda's confession of unalterable attachment to her beloved Albert, the cruel father resolved to take advantage of the power which the laws here give a man, to dispose both of his daughter and his wealth at pleasure; the latter he resolved to bequeath to his nephew Conrad, and Matilda was sent to a neighbouring convent; where, after a year's probation, she was to be compelled to renounce both Albert and the world.

"Conrad, whose artful insinuations had long worked on the weak mind of this misguided father, was not content with having thus separated these lovers, but by inciting persecution from the petty creditors of Albert, drove him from his home; and, after many fruitless endeavours to communicate with his lost mistress, he fled for sanctuary to this convent. Here (said the hoary monk) I became acquainted with the virtues of that excellent young man, for he was our guest about ten months.

"In all this time, Matilda passed her days in wretchedness and persecution. The abbess of her convent, Sister Theresa, who, to the dis-

grace of her profession and our holy church, disguised the disposition of a devil in the garment of a saint, became the friend and minister of Conrad's wicked purposes, and never ceased to persecute Matilda by false reports concerning Albert, urging her to turn her thoughts from him, to that heavenly spouse to whom she was about to make an everlasting vow. Matilda scorned her artifice; and love for Albert resisted every effort of the abbess to shake her confidence in his fidelity.

"She was in the last week of her noviciate, when her father became dangerously ill, and desired once more to see her. Conrad used every endeavour to prevent it, but in vain: she was sent for; and the interview was only in the presence of Conrad and the nurse; but when the dying father perceived the altered countenance of his once beloved child, his heart condemned him; he reflected that the wealth which he was going to quit for ever, belonged to her, and not to Conrad; and he resolved to expiate his cruelty by cancelling the will, and consenting to the union of Albert and Matilda. Having made a solemn declaration of his purpose, he called for the will, and taking Matilda's hand in one of his, and presenting the fatal writing with the other, he said, 'Forgive thy father!

destroy this paper, and be happy; so be my sins forgiven in heaven!' The joy of his heart, at this first effort of benevolence, was too much for his exhausted spirits, and he expired as he uttered the last words, letting fall the will which he was going to deliver.

"Matilda's gentle soul was torn with contending passions. She had lost her father at the moment when he had bestowed fresh life; and, in the conflict betwixt joy and grief, she sunk on the lifeless corpse, in an agony of gratitude and filial tenderness.

"Meanwhile Conrad did not slip this opportunity to complete his plan, which, by the dying words of his uncle, had been so nearly defeated; he secured the will, and corrupted the nurse, by promises and bribes, never to reveal what she had witnessed; half persuading the interested doating old woman, that it was only the effect of delirium in the deceased. The idea was but too well supported by the first question of Matilda, who exclaimed as she came to herself; 'Where am I! sure 'tis a dream! my father could not say I should be happy, he could not bid me tear that fatal will! Speak! am I really awake, or does my fancy mock me with such sounds?' The artful Conrad assured her nothing of the kind had passed, telling her that

her father had only mentioned Albert's name to curse him; and, with his last breath, had commanded her to take the veil at the expiration of the week. All this the perjured nurse confirmed; and then Matilda, being perfectly recovered, first saw the horrors of her situation. It was in vain for her to deny what they asserted, or remonstrate against their combined perfidy. She was presently, by force, again conveyed to her nunnery, in a state of mind much easier to imagine than describe.

"Here she was more violently than ever attacked by Theresa's persecution, who urged, with increasing vehemence, the pretended positive commands of her dying father; and, by the advice of Conrad, used severities of conventual discipline, which almost robbed the devoted victim of her reason; still pleading, that religion justified her conduct. Can it be wondered, that such cruel treatment should at length disturb the piety and faith of poor Matilda, and induce her to exclaim, with presumptuous bitterness, against the holy institutions of our church, and brand the sacred ordinances of our religion with unjust suspicions? 'Why! (said she) why are these massy grates permitted to exist, why are these hated walls sad prisons of innocence and youth, where fraud

and cruelty have power to torture and confine the helpless? Religion is the plea; religion! which should bring peace, and not affliction, to its votaries: then, surely, that religion which justifies these gloomy dungeons must be false, and I will abjure it; yes! I will fly to happier regions, where prisons are allotted only to the guilty; there, no false vows to heaven are exacted, but Albert and Matilda may yet be happy.' The possibility of an escape had never before presented itself, and, indeed, it could never have occurred but to one whose reason was disordered; for she well knew that the doors were secured by many bars and locks, and that the keys were always deposited beneath the pillow of the abbess.

"Her imagination was now too much heated to attend to any obstacles, and with a mixture of foresight, inspired by insanity, she packed up all her little ornaments of value, carelessly drew on her clothes, and put in her pocket some bread and provisions which had been left in her cell; then wrapping round her elegant form one of the blankets from the bed, she lighted a taper, and fearless walked towards the cloister door, idly expecting that it would fly open of its own accord, to innocence like hers—and now methinks I see her, with hair dishevelled,

face pale and wan, her large black eyes wildly staring, and the whole of her ghastly figure, lighted by the feeble glimmer of her taper, majestically stalking through the gloomy vaulted hall: arrived at the great door, she found it partly open, and, scarce believing what she saw, she quickly glided through it; but, as she passed, an iron bar which she had not observed, and which projected at the height of her forehead, slighted grazed her temple; and though she scarcely felt the wound, yet it added new horrors to her look, by covering her ghost-like face with streaks of blood.

"Although Matilda had never considered the improbability of passing this door, she now reflected with wonder how she had passed it, and fear of a discovery began to operate, as she, with more cautious steps, moved silently through the cloister towards the outer-gate; which when she approached, she heard Theresa's voice whispering these words: 'Adieu, dear Conrad; but remember that your life, as well as mine, depends on the secresy of our conduct:" then tenderly embracing each other, a man ran swiftly from her; and the abbess, turning round, stood motionless with horror at the bloody spectre firmly approaching. The guilty mind of Theresa could only suppose the horrid vision

to be the departed spirit of one whom she thought her cruelties had murdered; and, while the panic seized her whole frame, a gust of wind from the gate extinguishing the taper, Matilda seemed to vanish as she resolutely pushed through the postern door still open.

"Theresa was too well hackneyed in the ways of vice, to let fear long take possession of her prudence: the night was dark, and it would have been in vain to pursue the phantom, if her courage had suggested it; she therefore resolved to fasten both the doors, and return in silence to her own apartment, waiting in all the perturbation of anxiety and guilt, till morning should explain this dreadful mystery.

"Meanwhile Matilda, conscious in her innocence, and rejoicing in her escape, pursued a wandering course through the unfrequented paths of this mountainous district, during three whole days and nights; partly supporting her fatigue by the provisions she had taken with her, but more from a degree of insanity, which gave her powers beyond her natural strength; yet, in her distracted mind, this last instance of Theresa's wickedness had excited a disgust and loathing, bordering on fury, against every religious or monastic institution."

The monk had proceeded thus far, when he was called away to attend the duties of his convent, and promised to continue the narrative at his return.

VARIETY, No. 30.

No. CXXXIX.

—Oft we owe our safety to a skill
We could not teach, and must despair to learn.
But learn we might, if not too proud to stoop
To quadruped instructors, many a good
And useful quality, and virtue too.

COWPER.

THE father soon returned and proceeded with his narrative as follows:

"During the whole twelve months of Matilda's noviciate, no intercourse of any kind had passed betwixt her and Albert, who continued under the protection of this house, alike ignorant of her father's death, and of all the other transactions which I have now related: yet knowing that the term of her probation was to expire, he resolved once more to attempt some means of gaining admittance to her convent. With this view he made a journey thither in the disguise of a peasant; and on the very morning in which his mistress had escaped, he presented himself at the gate.

"Conrad, who had, by letter from the abbess, been informed that her prisoner was fled, was desired to come immediately, and devise some excuse to the sisters for what had happened;

for, although both to Conrad and Theresa the fact was evident enough, yet the sister nuns were distracted in conjectures, till, by one of those artful stretches of assurance which consummate villany finds it easy to exert, Conrad recommended a plausible expedient. And now religion (that constant comfort of the good, and powerful weapon of the wicked) presented itself, as the only resource in this emergency. Theresa was taught to say (for the present), that she had no doubt the sinful reluctance of Matilda to receive the veil, had excited the wrath of heaven: and that she was miraculously snatched away, or perhaps annihilated, to prevent the dreadful profanation of the holy ceremony at which she must that day have assisted.

"This plan had been settled, and Conrad was going with all haste in pursuit of the fugitive, when, at the outer gate, he met the pretended peasant. The penetrating eye, either of love or hatred, soon discovers a friend or enemy, however carefully disguised—Conrad and Albert knew each other. Instantly the flames of hatred, jealousy, and fury, kindled in their bosoms; and Conrad seizing Albert by the throat, exclaimed, 'I've caught the villain, the sacrilegious ravisher!'—A severe struggle ensued, in which Conrad drew his sword; but

Albert (who had no weapon) dexterously wrenched the instrument from the hand of Conrad, and plunged it in his bosom. The villain fell; while Albert fled with the utmost precipitation from the bloody scene, and returned in the evening to this convent.

"How shall I describe (said the good old monk) the contrast betwixt the looks of our unhappy youth at this moment, and on the preceding morning when he left us!—Then innocence, faintly enlightened by a gleam of hope, smiled in his features, as he cheerfully bid us adieu, and said, 'Perhaps I may again hear tidings of Matilda: should the will of heaven deny me happiness with her, I will come back resigned, and dedicate my future life to holy meditation void of guilt.' But now, he returned breathless and pale, his hands besmeared with blood, his limbs trembling; he could only utter in faltering words, 'Save me, reverend fathers! save me from justice, from myself, if possible! behold a murderer!'

"Some hours elapsed before we could collect from him the circumstances of a crime which had produced this extreme degree of horror and compunction in a mind so virtuous and innocent as that of Albert; and, having heard the whole, in which he took all the blame to

his own hasty conduct, we promised him protection; and endeavoured, though in vain, for two whole days, to speak comfort to his troubled mind, and to inspire confidence in the boundless mercy of his God. On the third day we were diverted from this arduous task, by the return and behaviour of one of our dogs: the poor animal, who had been out all day, was restless, and shewed evident marks of a desire that we should accompany him to the relief of some poor wretch, who was unable to reach our convent.

"Father Jerome, and I, resolved to follow him; and we proceeded about half a mile, when we turned from the beaten track, guided by our dog, to a retired glen, where human feet had hardly ever trod before. Here, on a rock, which projected over a dreadful precipice, sat an unhappy half-distracted object: I need not tell you, it was Matilda. She had crept, with wondrous difficulty, up a steep ascent, to a ledge of rock which overhung a fearful chasm (the very recollection of the place freezes my blood): when we first discovered her, she was eagerly clinging to a branch of yew which grew from a fissure in the rock above, and which half shaded her melancholy figure.

"The dog followed her steps; but Jerome

and I, unable to ascend a path so dangerous, stood, unobserved by her, at a little distance, on the opposite side of the glen.

"When Matilda first perceived the dog, she looked with wildness round her; then fixing her eyes with tenderness on the animal, she said, 'Are you returned to me again? and are you now my friend? Fie, fie upon it! Shall even dogs seduce the helpless! Perhaps you repent of what you would have done—You look piteously. Alas! Matilda can forgive you!—Poor brute! you know I followed you all the day long, and would have followed you for ever, but that you led me to a detested convent!—Thither Matilda will not go.—Why should you lead me to a prison? a dog cannot plead religion in excuse for treachery!' She paused; then taking a rosary of pearls from her side, she fantastically wound it about the dog's neck, saying, 'I have a boon to ask, and thus I bribe you; these precious beads are yours: now guide me to the top of this high mountain, that I may look about me, and see all the world.—Then I shall know whether my Albert still be living—Ah no! it cannot be! for then Matilda would be happy! and that can never, never be!' She then burst into a flood of tears, which seemed to give her some relief.

"When I thought she was sufficiently composed, Jerome and I discovered ourselves. On this she shrieked, and hid her face; but calling to her, I said, 'Albert is still alive.' She looked at us, till, by degrees, she had wildly examined us from head to foot; then turning to the dog, she seized him by the throat, and would have dashed him down the precipice, saying, 'Ah, traitor! is it thus thou hast betrayed me!'—But the animal struggled and got from her. She then firmly looked at us and cried, 'Here I am safe, deceitful monsters! safe from the tyranny of your religious persecution; for if you approach one single step, I plunge into this yawning gulf, and so escape your power.—Ha! ha! ha!'—Then recovering from a frantic laugh, she said, 'Yet, tell me; did you not say that Albert lives? Oh! that such words had come from any lips but those of a false monk!—I know your arts; with you such falsehoods are religious frauds; this is a pious lie, to ensnare a poor helpless linnet to its cage; but I tell you, cunning priests! here I defy you; nor will I ever quit this rock, till Albert's voice assures me I may do it safely.'

"You will easily imagine (continued the monk) the situation of Jerome and myself. Ignorant then of the manner in which Matilda

had escaped, we could only know from her words and actions that it was she herself, and that her senses were impaired; perplexed how to entice her from this perilous retreat, and knowing that one false step would dash her headlong down the dreadful chasm that parted us, at length I said, 'Gentle maid, be comforted; Albert and Matilda may yet be happy.' Then leaving Jerome concealed among the bushes to watch the poor lunatic, I hastened to the convent, to relate what I had seen.

"Meanwhile, Matilda, looking with vacant stare around her, from time to time repeated my words, 'Albert and Matilda may yet be happy;' then pausing, she seemed delighted with the sound re-echoed from the rocks, again repeating, 'Albert and Matilda may yet be happy;' still varying the modulation of her voice, as joy, grief, doubt, despair, or hope, alternately prevailed in her disordered mind."

At this interesting period of the narrative, the venerable father was a second time called out, and promised to conclude his story when he returned.

VARIETY, NO. 31.

No. CXL.

Metus in vita pœnarum pro male factis
Est insignibus insignis———
Quæ tamen et si absunt, at mens, sibi conscia factis,
Præmetuens, adhibet stimulos, torretque flagellis.
LUCRETIUS.

"Yes," here on earth the guilty have in view
The mighty pains to mighty mischiefs due:—
And last, and most, if these were cast behind,
Th' avenging horror of a conscious mind.
DRYDEN.

"I WILL not long detain you (resumed the reverend friar) with the effect my narrative had on the dejected Albert; how he at first exclaimed, 'Can there be comfort for a guilty wretch like Albert?' and eagerly ran towards the place; then moved more calmly, on my representing how fatal might be surprise to one in so dangerous a situation; and, at length, shrinking back, as he approached the spot, and turning to me, he said "Father, I will go no farther! Heaven has ordained, as a punishment for the murder I have committed, that I should become a witness to the shocking death of the poor lost Matilda; at my approach, in frantic ecstasy, she will quit her hold, and perish before my sight.' I urged him to proceed, but it was

in vain; he sat down on a bank, and was silently wrapt in an agony of irresolution, when he heard, at a little distance, the well-known voice of the poor lunatic, still repeating my words; 'Albert and Matilda may yet be happy.' Roused by the sound, he started up; and, cautiously advancing, he exclaimed, 'Just Heaven! fulfill those words, and let them, indeed, be happy.'

"Matilda knew the voice, and, carefully treading a path which would have seemed impracticable to one possessed of reason, she descended from the ledge on which she sat, and approached with cautious steps; but, at the sight of Albert, she flew impetuously forward, till on seeing me, she as suddenly ran back, and would have again retreated to the rock, shrieking, 'It is all illusion! priestcraft! it is no real Albert, and I am betrayed.' We pursued and caught her; then, finding my religious garb augmented the disorder of her mind, I withdrew, leaving only Albert to calm her needless fears.

"But no persuasion, even from him, could induce her to come within view of the convent gates; I provided, therefore, accommodations for her in the cottage of a labourer, at some little distance; where, for many days, her delirium continued, while a fever threatened a

speedy dissolution. During this period, Albert was labouring under all the anxiety which his situation could inspire; the deed he had committed sat heavy on his soul, and he dared not hope for an event, which his own guilty thoughts reproached him with having not deserved.

"At length the crisis of the fever shewed signs of a recovery, and now his joy was without bounds; even the blood of Conrad seemed a venial crime, and he triumphed in the anticipation of reward for all he had suffered: but this happiness was of short duration; for, at that time, I received a letter from the abbess Theresa, demanding back the fugitive, whose retreat she had discovered. This requisition I knew I must obey; and, giving the letter to Albert, I was going to explain the necessity of my compliance, when he burst out in bitter execrations against this and all other religious houses; cursing their establishment as a violation of the first law of nature, which commands an intercourse betwixt the sexes.

"Having heard, with a mixture of patience, pity, and resentment, all that his rage or disappointment could suggest, I answered nearly in these words, beginning calmly, but by degrees assuming all the authority the case required: 'My son, blame not the pious institu-

tions of our holy church, sanctified by the observance of many ages; nor impiously arraign the mysterious decrees of Providence, which often produces good from evil. This sacred edifice has been consecrated, like many others, by our pious ancestors, for purposes, honourable to heaven, and useful to mankind; these hospitable doors are ever open to distress; and the chief object of our care is, to discover and relieve it. This holy mansion has long been an asylum against the oppression of human laws, which drove thee from thine home; and, but a few days since, thou thyself blessed an institution which saved the wretched Matilda, perishing with madness. Nay, at this very moment, its mercy shelters from the hands of justice, a murderer! yet thy presumption dares deny its general use, from thine own sense of partial inconvenience, and execrate monastic institutions, because, by a separation of the sexes, lewdness and sensuality are checked: but know, short-sighted youth, that the world will not remain unpeopled, because a few of its members consecrate their lives to holy meditation; nor shall the human species become extinct, because Albert and Matilda cannot be united, to propagate a race of infidels and murderers.' I stopped, for I perceived the gentle Albert

was touched with my rebuke; and falling on his knees, he cried in the emphatic words of scripture, 'Father! I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight.' 'It is enough, my son (I replied), and now I will compassionate your situation; I will do more, for though I cannot detain Matilda longer than till she is well enough to be removed; yet, in that time (if heaven approve my endeavours), I may contribute to your happiness, by interceding with her father; and should I fail in the attempt, this roof, which thy hasty passion has profaned, shall yet be a refuge to thee from despair; and I will strive to raise thy thoughts above the trifling disappointments of a transitory world.

"I could not wait the reply of Albert (said the prior), being at this time called out to welcome the arrival of a stranger, who, they said, was dangerously ill: this proved to be no other than the wounded Conrad. He, in few words, explained the motive of his visit, telling me, that immediately after the rencounter, dreading that awful presence in which no secret is concealed, and to which, he apprehended, he was summoned by his own sword in the injured hand of Albert, he had vowed (if heaven would grant him life) to repair the wrongs he had committed. He had already executed a deed, re-

signing all the fortune of her father in favour of Matilda; he had declared his guilty commerce with Theresa, that she might repent, or suffer punishment; he had paid all the debts of Albert, and justified his character to the world; and, finally, he had resolved to implore the prayers of myself, and the venerable fathers of this house, to make him worthy of becoming one of our holy order, that if he lived, he might be useful; or if he died, he might be happy."

The prior then concluded this interesting narrative, by saying, that Albert and Matilda were united, and are still blessed in each other's virtues, improved by difficulties thus surmounted; that Theresa had too far profaned the laws of heaven to have any confidence in religion, and died by her own hands; but that Conrad recovered slowly from his wound, and, after living many years an honour to the order he professed, he died in peace: the faithful dog, he said, was the favourite companion of Albert and Matilda, who had begged him from the convent, and encouraged him to pursue his task of discovering travellers who had lost their way, but whom he now brought to the hospitable mansion of this virtuous pair.

He then briefly hinted arguments in favour of monastic institutions; yet liberally allowing

that the religion of his country might, in certain points, be wrong; and, knowing me to be a protestant, I suppose he acknowledged more than I ought in justice to his candour to relate. For this reason I have purposely suppressed the name and situation of his convent; but I shall ever remember these words with which he finished this discourse. "True religion (said he), howsoever it may vary in outward ceremonies, or articles of faith, will always teach you to do good, to love and help each other; it will teach you, that no sin, however secret, can long remain concealed; and that when the world and all its vanities have palled the sated appetite, you must seek refuge in conscious innocence, or a sincere repentance. Then, no matter whether you choose a convent for retirement, or commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

VARIETY, No. 32.

"The monastery of Augustins, upon Mount St. Bernard, in Switzerland, is, perhaps, the most liberal, as well as the mot humane establishment in Europe. The friars who belong to this monastery, are, as Fielding observes of Alworthy in Tom Jones, 'deserving the notice of God himself.' Human beings, replete with benevolence, studying how they can best please their creator, by doing most good to their fellow-creatures." This convent was founded in the tenth century, by St. Bernard, a native of Savoy, from whom the mountain takes its appellation. It has twice been consumed by fire,

and each time re-built upon a larger scale; and, though an extensive habitation, is not always sufficiently large for the purposes of its institution. Its revenues, which were originally considerable, are at present much reduced, and are principally drawn from small estates in the Valais, and in the canton of Berne. The government of Berne (though a protestant canton) suffers them, in consideration of the great utility of the institution, to remain undisturbed. The fraternity, however, derive from the celebration of masses, and the collections made for them in the neighbouring countries, more than sufficient to answer the current expences; and it is even imagined there is a saving for contingencies. There are thirty members, of whom only ten or twelve reside, the rest (including the provost, a most worthy man) occupy the different livings dependant upon the convent: and on account of their age, infirmities, or long services, are permitted to be absent. The spot in which this monastery stands, is eight thousand feet perpendicular from the level of the Mediterranean, and is said to be, and I believe is, the most elevated dwelling-place in the world; for there is not even a peasant's chalet (or hut) upon any of the neighbouring Alps, erected more than three thousand feet above the Mediterranean; and the chalets are only tenanted during eight or ten weeks in the midst of summer, whereas this convent is constantly inhabited.

"It is upon a height with the eternal snows, situated between two lofty mountains covered with glaciers, and exposed to the piercing and ungovernable fury of the north-east wind. The thermometer in January is frequently at 23 below freezing point, in July or August seldom more than 6 or seven above it. The cold, however, is not so extreme, but that, in this latter season, there is some degree of vegetation, though indeed in so very weak a state, that the fathers, who have constructed little gardens raised on terraces in the warmest aspects, can with difficulty rear a few unripe lettuces and dwarf cabbages; and even these in so small a quantity, that it is more an object of amusement and relaxation to

them, than of utility. At certain distances, there are poles to direct the road, and small hovels designed either as resting places upon the ascent, or to afford immediate shelter from the severity of the weather. Close to the convent are the mansions for the dead, where lie exposed to view, without order, and (on account of the coldness of the atmosphere) without decay, the dead bodies of those unfortunate travellers who have perished in this ungenial climate.

"In this desert spot, in this centre, as it were, of the boisterous elements and the wreck of worlds, secluded from the whole earth, but not from their God, live, and live happily, (if internal merit has its recompense) these hospitable anchorites. The sun, it is true, scarcely ever warms them with its rays, nor does the western breeze waft upon its wings the blessings of the milder climates; but, in exchange, they enjoy that serenity of mind, which contentment only can afford, and which actions like theirs are particularly calculated to produce. It must, indeed, be a most interesting sight to witness the humanity of these good monks during the season when this passage into Italy is most frequented; to observe with what readiness and alacrity they receive all travellers; how they chafe, rub, and warm those who stand in need of their medical assistance, and by means of warm soups, and wholesome aliments (for spirituous liquors are thought pernicious), restore strength and spirits to the more robust, whom the keenness of the air, or over fatigue, have rendered incapable of prosecuting their journey. All nations, all religions, have an equal claim to their compassion; they are the good Samaritans, whose universal benevolence is restrained by no contracted prejudice. All ranks and denominations of men are relieved by them; and though there is, perhaps, some slight deference paid to the outward appearance of their guests, some more decent chamber, or more delicate food, allotted to the rich than to the poor; yet the same attentions extend invariably to both, and the same means are employed for their comfort or recovery.

"But it is not when the passage is open, that the zeal and

vigilance of these good religionists are most conspicuous, and that their humane endeavours merit our warmest admiration; during this season, they do no more than you or any other charitably-disposed person might, and, I hope, would be disposed to do in similar situations. But it is in winter, rather at the approach of spring, that they subject themselves to the greatest dangers. From the month of November to the month of May, not a day passes, but, accompanied with their servants, and two or three great dogs* of the Newfoundland species, they expose themselves to all the inclemencies of the weather, in order to meet and conduct the wandering traveller to the convent. Through the thickest fogs, and frequently across enormous drifts of snow, they resolutely accomplish their generous purposes, conducting, and often carrying upon their shoulders, those unhappy wretches, whom the violence of the cold, or over fatigue, has bereft either of the use of limbs, or deprived of their faculties; frequently they are reluctantly obliged to make use of violence, and are forced to rub, shake, and even to beat the unhappy sufferers, in order to rouse them from that lethargic stupor, which is invariably the forerunner of a frozen death.

"Great care is taken, at the same time, lest the good friars themselves, while thus attentively occupied, do not, in their turn, suffer the very calamity they are thus humanely endeavouring to avert from others. For in winter the cold is so dreadfully intense in these upper regions, that to continue without motion in the open air, during the space even of a few minutes, is sufficient to bring on the first symptoms of congelation; and as nothing but constant exercise is able to prevent the stagnation of the blood, they are forced unremittingly to strike their hands and feet against the long poles which they carry with them, in order to promote the circulation. In a word, so great is their merit, and so almost more

* The sagacity of these animals in the discovery of the bodies buried under the snow, and in finding out the safest road, is so very extraordinary, that it seems as if Providence had gifted them for the preservation of mankind.

than human their efforts of courage and resolution in the promotion of this melancholy but generous duty, that all that has been said, or could be spoken in their praise, must, and does, fall far short of their great merit."

FEMALE MENTOR, No. 38.

No. CXLI.

Quid faciam Romæ ?
JUVENAL.

What business have I in Rome ?

Sir,

I SUCCEEDED, in my twenty-third year, to a small paternal estate, in a remote corner of the kingdom, where I have since passed forty years, without finding any of them hang heavy on my hands; and which I, last spring, reluctantly quitted to spend a few days in town, where my presence was rendered necessary by a law-suit, the decision of which was of great importance to my family. I will not deny but the first fortnight passed off tolerably well; I felt myself agreeably entertained at the places of public festivity, and enjoyed a still higher pleasure in the society of two or three old acquaintance, with whom I talked over our school-boy tricks, and Oxford schemes, with a degree of pleasure, which, perhaps, we never experienced from the actual execution of either. Short, however, was the time, during which any thing could render a life of irregularity, noise, and hurry, tolerable

to one, who had passed forty years in the enjoyment of tranquillity, health, and leisure.

The late hours which even the most orderly families were obliged to keep, the strange mixture of modern society, where they are all acquaintance and no friends, and the general dissipation of all ranks, together with some untoward accidents which protracted my law-suit far beyond the expected time, made me so completely disgusted with London, that, for the last week, I never closed my eyes without mentally exclaiming, "Oh rus, quando te aspiciam!"

One day, as I was returning from Westminster-hall, inwardly fretting at the chicane of law, and good-naturedly giving all its professors to the devil, I was struck with the title of your Paper, which cut a most conspicuous figure, as it lay in the window of your publisher, Mr. Egerton, at White-hall.

As I had been all my life a kind of loiterer, and was then more particularly one, I immediately purchased all the numbers, and have regularly taken it in ever since. I will not hurt your modesty by expatiating on the pleasure I received from your publication in general, and shall only observe, that I was more particularly pleased with the history of your corre-

spondent Agrestis; whose adventures you have recorded, and which, indeed, has principally induced me to trouble you with this letter, imagining that our similarity of thinking would entitle the writer to your approbation, if not the work to your acceptance. But to return to my subject—In process of time, after various motions and adjournments, my cause finally came on, and my counsel (to do him justice) having in a learned speech, of two hours, proved to the satisfaction of the court, that black was not white, a verdict, with complete costs of suit, was given in my favour; an event which I assure you scarce gave me so much pleasure, as the idea of escaping from the regions of ceremony and smoke, and revisiting my small but neat cottage, whose attractions I am unfashionable enough to think improved by the society of an amiable woman, and a large circle of affectionate children.

So eager, indeed, was I to quit a place to which half the British nation appear to be running, that I ordered Peter to be at the door, with the horses, by seven the next morning.

Peter, equally tired of London with his master, was punctual to his time; and, hastily passing through the empty and silent streets, I got clear of town before the chimney-sweeper and

the milk-maid had commenced their early scream, to the annoyance of its peaceable and sleepy inhabitants.

It was not, however, till I had passed through those adjacent villages, whose rows of houses, scarce broken by a few interwoven nursery-grounds and gardens, make the road for miles an almost continued street, that I could be satisfied that I was fairly out of London; but, having at length emerged into something like the country, and gained a purer atmosphere, I could not forbear looking back on that receptacle of dissipation, folly, and vice, which I had just quitted, with an emotion not much unlike those of a state prisoner who has escaped from the horrors of the Bastile.

But, though I could not but reflect on my own emancipation with a light heart, it was not without a melancholy sensation, that I remarked the rapidity with which the already overgrown capital is daily extending its limits, and edging into the country on every side. Which way soever I turned my eyes, nothing was to be seen but buildings or preparations for building: new houses and even new streets, rising like exhalations. Rows of buildings so huddled as to intercept all prospect, and country seats without one rural attribute. So numerous, in-

deed, are these excrescences of the metropolis (which threaten, in time, to over-run the whole county of Middlesex, if not Surry), that, used as I had been to the crowds which choke the streets of London, I was, at first, at a loss to imagine where a sufficient number of occupiers could be found, and could not help hoping that the proprietors would lose the interest of their money.

But of the fallaciousness of this idea, from some observations which I made in my journey, I was soon completely convinced. The numerous equipages of country gentlemen hurrying with their families up to town, together with the deserted mansions on each side of the road, (whose unweeded court-yards and smokeless chimnies sufficiently attested the absence of their owners), were full proofs that London and its environs were in no danger of wanting inhabitants.

When I contemplated, indeed, the immense crowd of emigrants of different ranks and ages, who, in various conveyances, were posting up to town; from the glaring and splendid equipage of the new-made peer, to the low-hung chariot of the squire, I could scarcely help exclaiming (like Sterne in the Desobligeante), Alas! my countrymen, where are you running to?

Now, were the bad effects of this fashionable migration confined only to themselves, their folly would be scarce worth combating; for they whose perverted taste induces them to prefer the smoky glare of flambeaux and lamps, the vertigo of dissipation, or the frenzy of play, to the simple beauties of nature, when enlivened by the vivid tints of spring, or softened by the mellow gleams of autumn, deserve to experience its certain consequences, increased mortgages, ruined health, and disunited families. But the worst part of the story is the torment and inconvenience they occasion to their more humble or more prudent neighbours, during the period which the emptiness of London obliges them to spend at their mansions in the country; where they constantly take care to be as assuming, ill-bred, and vicious as they possibly can, in order to convince their acquaintance that they have not spent their time and money to no purpose. For nothing can exceed the alteration which a journey to London causes in every part of a country gentleman's family. An alteration which is not confined to a few supernumerary inches in the crown of a hat, or the protuberance of a handkerchief; but extends itself to the more important articles of opinions, conversation, and manners. The heir apparent

whose ambition had been hitherto satisfied by sporting a smarter coat, or a lighter pair of boots, than his neighbours, and whose gallantry had been confined to a game of romps, or snatching a kiss from his cousins, now no longer comes into a room with a sheepish bow to every one in it, or sits in a corner twirling his thumbs, and playing with his handkerchief, but lounges in with a most fashionable nonchalance, throws himself upon a sofa, or takes his station before the fire, and without the least regard to the feelings of the audience, entertains himself by giving them an account of the noble company with whom he has got drunk at the Shakspeare, made riots at Covent-Garden, and slept in the round-house; declares the Duke of —— is one of the honestest dogs in England, but assures them there is not the least truth in the cruel report of an intrigue between him and the beautiful Lady * * *. Nor are the daughters in the least behind their brother in displaying their town acquirements: they too have got rid of their rustic modesty, mauvaise honte; they too have kept great company, have flirted with Earls and Knights, Members of Parliament, and Colonels of the Guards; can repeat the scandal of the most fashionable coteries, and hint that they shall soon be made

members of the "bas bleu." Nay, even the squire and his lady, who (excepting a small propensity to quarrel about game and precedence, and to grow warm at backgammon and whist) were quiet good kind of people, now affect to lay down the law to their little circle, and instruct their ignorant country neighbours in politics, literature, and dress. These are, indeed, very valuable attainments, and, perhaps, not dearly purchased at the price of a little virtue and sense, health and freshness, especially as the bloom of the young ladies may be so easily repaired. Yet, I know not how it happens, but I have seldom observed them produce those happy effects, which might rationally be expected from qualifications so hard to be attained, and of such intrinsic value. For such is the perverseness, and the ingratitude of human nature, that the display of all this superabundant knowledge and politeness, oftener excites transient admiration than permanent esteem; and the only good effects which a journey to London produces on these occasions are confined to the happy families themselves, who generally feel pretty lasting ones; since the sons pass their youth without knowledge and without credit, and the daughters grow old without fortune, without reputation, and with-

out husbands. Considering, therefore, the matter impartially, I passed in my own thoughts this unanimous resolution, That the undue influence of London has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished. Nor could I avoid wishing a law passed, by which every British subject of each sex should be forbid entering the metropolis, unless they first shewed just and satisfactory cause for their journey. This thought, the indulgence of which beguiled a tedious day's journey, and a solitary evening at the inn, pursued me in my sleep, and produced one of those dreams which really denote a foregone conclusion, and of which I may, perhaps, send you the particulars at another opportunity, if you encourage me to do so by publishing this letter. In the mean time,

I remain yours, &c.

THE LOITERER, No. 54, February 6, 1790.

No. CXLII.

Et quæ tanta fuit Romam tibi causa videndi?
VIRGIL.

——Why desert your home,
What great occasion call'd you thence to Rome?

Sir,

THE early insertion of my former letter having convinced me, that, though averse to dreaming yourself, you have no objection to your correspondents undertaking that office for you, I shall, without farther apology, lay before you the following account of my sleeping thoughts.

I had scarce closed my eyes, when the idea, which had so much occupied my mind, returned with redoubled force; and I was perfectly convinced, that the legislature had adopted the plan recommended in my last, and had actually stationed proper officers at every avenue of the metropolis, with strict orders to admit none who could not give a proper account of themselves, or, in the legal words, shew cause for their journey. Of these, the western extremity was allotted, sir, to you and myself; and, I imagined, we took our post at Hyde-Park turnpike, with a fixed resolution of stopping that crowd of emigrants who, like a second

inundation of Goths and Vandals, were pouring in from all quarters upon the capital of the world. The earlier hours of the morning afforded us but little employment; the only people who presented themselves were either gardeners, nurserymen, or others of the same rank, who were stupid enough to be minding their business; and, excepting a pretty fresh-looking country girl, who declared she was going to London to better herself, few or none were sent back. At last, however, the road began to fill, and an equipage soon approached, whose appearance promised us a better opportunity of exercising our function. This chaise, which was preceded by a very smart servant, and followed by several others, exhibited a curious specimen of what may be called the art of packing. Trunks, portmanteaus, and cloak-bags of various sizes, were piled up both behind and before. The top was almost bent in with the weight of an imperial, on which an immense hat-box, lashed tight with cords, had the appearance of the watch-tower of an old castle, and the inside was so stuffed with band-boxes, that there seemed but little room for any other passengers. On a closer examination we found there were two ladies, neither of whom, at first, appeared disposed to be very communicative; but, on being

informed of the necessity of answering our interrogatories, the eldest informed us, that "the other lady (her daughter), notwithstanding she was a person of the very first rank and fashion, had lately done Mr. H——, a commoner of large fortune, the honour of taking his name: that the said Mr. H——, entirely forgetting the aforesaid obligation, had barbarously, inhumanly, and maliciously endeavoured to keep the said lady at an old mansion-house in the country; and that she herself had, at the request of her daughter, been obliged to interfere; in consequence of which, he had at last consented to the journey." "And pray madam," replied I, "where is Mr. H—— all this while?" "Here, sir, here," answered a little diminutive figure of a man, whom we had before overlooked, and who then, with difficulty, popped his head from between two band-boxes; "and though I am here much against my will, yet if you have any regard to my future peace and quiet, you will not send us home again; I am sure, if you are a married man, you will not."—The case was, indeed, perplexing: to send him back into the country with two such companions seemed not a little cruel, and to let them pass was impossible. After some hesitation, therefore, we came to the following resolution: that the mother-in-

law should be set down on the other side the gate, and the remaining couple turn their horses' heads towards the country. This difficulty was scarce settled, before another of at least equal importance arose. A neat chariot, driven by a servant in handsome livery, now drove up; it contained two ladies, whose looks sufficiently testified what the lozenge on their carriage at first suggested; that they were, either from choice or chance, still in a state of celibacy. The characteristic traits of their faces were however different; for, while the placid features and plump rotundity of one seemed to prove that she had entirely given up all matrimonial schemes, and wisely reconciled herself to the prospect of an old age of cards, the care-worn countenance of the other (little mended by a profusion of youthful ornaments) equally convinced us, that this unfortunate maiden was exactly in that state of betweenity, which is supposed least favourable to the improvement of female temper. In this opinion we were not mistaken; for, in answer to our interrogatories, the eldest informed us, "that they were the daughters of a country gentleman, by whom they were left in the possession of an easy independence; that, being extremely nice in their choice, they had never yet been induced to

change their situation; and that they were now going to town partly in order to amuse themselves, and partly with the expectation of finding, in the elegant circles of the metropolis, some person more worthy their acceptance than any who had hitherto offered;" and concluded with hoping, "that we would not think of turning them back, since it might have a fatal effect on their future fortune." To this request, however, we could not, without breach of trust, accede; but, after some little deliberation, qualified our refusal, by telling them, that London was a very improper place for girls to be in without the protection of some friends or relations; and more particularly dangerous to those who had the misfortune to be young and handsome. This compliment was not without its effect; the frown which had begun to overspread their faces relaxed into a faint smile, and they drove off in tolerable good humour with themselves. The next who applied for admittance was a young man of about two and twenty, who drove a most fashionable phaeton with four cropped greys. The usual question being put to him, he replied that he went to town to kill time, and because he was tired of the country. On being more closely examined, he allowed, that there were many amusements in the country of

which he was particularly fond, while there was not one diversion in town for which he cared a farthing. On our expressing our astonishment at this account, he at last added, with some degree of passion, " Why, zounds, sir, I am married!" in short, we soon discovered, that a very few months after coming into possession of an immense fortune, he had, in a moment of passion, or caprice, united himself to a beautiful girl of mean birth, who had either virtue or artifice sufficient to refuse to be his on easier terms; and that he was actually flying the country, in order to get rid of a companion of whose person he was cloyed, and whose manners he was ashamed of. This case admitted of no doubt, and he was sent back, with orders not to appear there again; at least till he could bring himself to let his wife be of the party. After this gentleman's dismission we were, for some time, without any employment; at length, however, a chaise and four appeared at a distance driving with a velocity which seemed to threaten instant destruction, to every man, woman, and child, who stood in the way. But all this extraordinary rapidity we found, on a nearer approach, to be very unequal to the wishes of the travellers; one of whom, by rapping the window and other means, continued to

make various signs to the postilions to redouble their efforts, and make the horses go faster than they could. As soon as they came within hearing, or rather sooner, the same gentleman throwing himself half out of the carriage, ordered the gate to be thrown open in a peremptory tone, swearing at the same time that he could not possibly stay a minute. But finding, after some altercation, that passion was of no service, he condescended to inform us, that he was then running away with a lady to whom he had been long attached, and whose friends, on the most mercenary motives, refused their consent: and conjured us, in a somewhat softer accent, not to stop them, as the least delay might be fatal. In this request he was joined by the lady, who assured us, that nothing but the most absolute necessity should have induced her to take so rash a step; as she had, in every other respect, been a most obedient daughter. What answer I, as a father, should have made, I know not; but I thought that you, sir, either convinced by her reasoning, or won by her beauty, ordered the gate to be immediately thrown open, and they proceeded on their journey with an inconceiveable rapidity. We were interrupted in the reflections which the above-mentioned scene gave rise to, by the arrival of those numerous

conveyances, which, under the names of diligences, stages, mercurys, and flys, carry the inhabitants of Great Britain to the most distant parts of the island in less time than their grandfathers would have gone from one country town to another. Various were the character and the business of those who travelled in them; none, however, worth noticing, except a genteel young man, who, on being questioned on the cause of his journey, informed us, "that having no fortune, or chance of preferment, in the country, he was going to town in hopes of obtaining some creditable employment, for which his education had qualified him; and that he was not without hopes of reaping benefit from the patronage of Lord ——, to whom he was distantly related." "This, sir," replied I, "is certainly a very good reason; but I must beg leave to put a few questions to you relative to your acquirements, and I shall soon be able to judge by your answers, whether your chance of preferment is really so good as you imagine. In the first place, sir, do you understand play? No, sir. Are you an adept at horse-racing? No, sir. Have you thoroughly studied the science of boxing? No, sir. Can you write election songs, canvass votes, and head mobs? No, sir. And lastly, sir, can you eat a live cat? No, sir, indeed,

I cannot.—Then let me recommend it to you, sir, to return into the country, and get a little more information as to these particulars, or, depend on it, you will never be a companion for the great." As it now began to grow dark, we imagined our labours for the day to be over; when a party of men on horseback attracted our notice, whom, from the peculiar smartness of their dress, and the miserable appearance of their horses, I should have been at a loss to have known what to think of, had not you, sir, at one view, informed me, that they were Oxford men going on a scheme to town. I had scarce time to inquire into the nature and purport of their expedition, when the forwardest of them rode up, and ordered us to make haste and let them through, with an air which promised no very quiet acquiescence in a refusal. Upon being told he must first inform us what was his business in London, he replied, "Why, what the devil's that to you, my old buck?" Then, turning to the rest of his party, who by dint of whipping and spurring were now come up, exclaimed, "Here, Careless, is a damn'd quiz won t let us go through till we tell him what is our business in town."—"Oh, won't he," answered Careless, "we'll see that presently."—"Damn him, let's row him, Racket," exclaimed

a third; upon which they unanimously turned their horses against me, and, with uplifted sticks (none of the smallest), made so desperate an attack, that I was not sorry to wake and find it only a dream.

I am,

Sir,

Yours, &c.

THE LOITERER, No. 55, February 13, 1790.

No. CXLIII.

Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
The bee's collected treasures sweet,
Sweet music's melting fall; but sweeter yet
The still small voice of gratitude.

GRAY.

THERE appears to be no vice to which mankind is subject, but there is also some virtue which is exactly its reverse; thus courage is the opposite to cowardice, modesty to impudence, humility to pride, and integrity to deceitfulness; but it does not always happen, that each virtue is considered amiable in proportion as its opposite vice is deemed detestable. Is it that men love rather to condemn than praise? In other words, that to punish evil with reproach, is more congenial to our nature, than to reward the good with commendation? or, is the world, in general, so good, that, instances of vicious conduct being rare, we seize more eagerly the opportunities of censure than applause? I am led to this train of thought by having frequently observed how different is the treatment of gratitude and ingratitude: the latter is justly execrated as the blackest vice that can disgrace the human breast. "Ingratitude," says Shak-

speare, "is as if this mouth should tear this hand for feeding it:" yet its opposite, virtue, is seldom honoured with the "meed of praise;" and the most generous service that a man may render to his benefactor, is damped by the cold and chilling remark, "that he has only done his duty."

If, in all the occurrences of our responsibility, we could ensure ourselves this seemingly scanty pittance of reward, we might pass through life with satisfaction, and meet even death without fear; but while so few can boast that they have done their duty, it is invidious to withdraw our warm applause from those whose conduct may deserve it. Great opportunities of exercising virtue do not present themselves every day: but our gratitude can never long remain inactive; but may remind us of benefits received, and obligations due. The truly pious man will never retire to rest, or wake from sleep, but with thanksgiving to that Being, who dispenses happiness with life, and makes adversity itself a source of future blessing.

Ingratitude is a constant subject of complaint with all mankind; and this, I fear, proceeds from their being more sensible of the benefits conferred by them, than of those which they receive. If a man do a good office, he

never forgets that he has done it, he never sees the person whom he has obliged, but with a self-congratulation of applause; on the contrary, if he receive an obligation from another, he may express a sense of gratitude, at first, with fervour perhaps unfeigned; but time so moderates the ardour of this sense, that he at length forgets his benefactor, and even views him with indignation if he but discontinue for a while his wonted favours. My friend Aimwell complained to me of the ungrateful treatment he suffered from the tradesmen of the neighbouring market-town. The grocer, who at first bowed to the earth with gratitude for the honour of ranking the squire amongst his customers; because he occasionally supplied the Hall with certain petty articles: now that he furnishes almost every thing, mutters to the steward, because the tea used in the family is bought elsewhere. And the butcher, who supplies the house with meat, claims the liberty of coursing, when he pleases, in the park and fields adjoining: and though he owes his existence, as a tradesman, to the squire, yet he resents (as publicly as he dares) the message of the keeper, to remove his sports to greater distance: forgetful of the constant debt of gratitude, he considers as an injury, the refusal of that pri-

vilege, which he would not presume to expect, but from a cause that ought to make him the more grateful.

This sort of ingratitude is much more universal than we at first imagine; for I consider as very nearly allied to it, every fastidious or unreasonable propensity, whether relating to man or beast, or even to inanimate objects, which leads us to expect more, because much is already given: thus, while we look on a well-painted picture, if any little distortion of limb, or error in the drawing, be discovered, we turn from it with disgust, regardless of the numerous excellencies with which it may otherwise abound.

Those who have most to give, are most likely to complain of man's ingratitude; for this reason, a king observed, that his power of dispensing favours was the most painful task of royalty since he never gave a place away, but he made ninety-nine discontented, and one ungrateful subject. Nearly to the same purpose, was my Lord B—'s answer, on being asked Why he discontinued giving annual balls? He said, "That his rooms were not large enough to contain more than two hundred persons; and that he feared making all above that number, who were his friends, his enemies; for he had observed, that those ladies who were invited,

forget it before next year; but those who were not invited, never forget it while they live."

I will conclude my observations on this subject by describing the character of a clergyman now actually living in the county of Norfolk; but whose real name I shall disguise under that of EUCHARIS. This gentleman was early in life presented to the adjoining Rectories of B*** and B**, by a patron, who at that time was unmarried, and therefore had no idea of securing a reversion of the livings to a younger son; and Eucharis has now enjoyed the benefice full thirty years. Being hospitable with economy, and charitable with prudence, the income of his living, with some private fortune, have enabled him to live in splendid affluence, and leave a saving every year for extraordinary purposes, which gratitude has pointed out. He first considered the heavenly Master whom he serves, as his original and greatest Patron; and, though his piety would check the presumption of repaying for the blessings he enjoys, yet he knows, that every attempt in man to show his gratitude is acceptable in the sight of heaven. With this view, he has consecrated part of the annual savings of his income to repair an ancient Gothic structure, where he exhorts his flock to worship; and has actually expended many hundred pounds

to restore and beautify the temple of his God. This singular act of piety was secretly conducted: he raised an annual sum from his parishioners, that he might not be suspected of the fact, and celebrates the rebuilding of the church, as the effect of voluntary contribution; nor did he neglect any other duties of a Christian, to save the money so appropriated; for his private will directed charities, amounting to nearly half his income; his barns and store-houses are a repository for the industrious poor, who buy of him all the necessaries of life at a price considerably less than what he pays for them; he never gives money to the idle, but liberally recompenses labour, and relieves with tenderness the wants of age, of sickness, and infirmity; demonstrating gratitude to heaven, by acts of charity to men.

He has shown, in a manner almost unprecedented, his gratitude to his earthly patron: that gentleman died about ten years since, leaving an estate entailed on his eldest son, and three other boys so scantily provided for, that they could ill afford the expense of a learned education. Eucharis knew this, and, taking them to the parsonage, he considered them as part of his own family; instructed them in the learned languages himself, and sent them to the university to qualify them for orders, that they might

in time fill those benefices which are in the gift of their eldest brother. Nay, he has done more; he has actually resigned one of those livings which he himself received from their father, to the eldest of these three, who is just come of age to hold it: having no nearer relations, he considers the descendants of his patron as his heirs, and thus prolongs his gratitude to a second generation. A character so unexampled will appear to many the produce of invention; but though I might offend the modesty of my friend, by mentioning his name, I have recorded the county which actually possesses so bright an ornament of human nature; and my heart feels (I trust) a laudable degree of pride and exultation, when I reflect that I am personally acquainted with this glorious pattern of unabating gratitude.

P. S. Since I wrote this essay, I have been most deeply afflicted by the following paragraph in the Norfolk Chronicle, of 22d March, 1788: "On Monday last, died the Rev. William Hewett, Rector of Bacons-thorpe and Bodham."

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